TOWARD A BETTER WORLD

EVANGELINE BOOTH

This volume of sermon addresses is the evangel of Evangeline Booth.

It has in it that zest and fervor which have marked the heroic efforts of the ARMY in all its redemptive work for mankind. There is here the consecrated enthusiasm and much of the irrepressible joy of the ARMY in these messages.

Ministers and teachers will welcome the wide variety of illustrations and ideas, and the laymen will find the sweet spirit of the book a genuine source of comfort, inspiration, and interest.

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EVANGELINE BOOTH

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BY

EVANGELINE BOOTH

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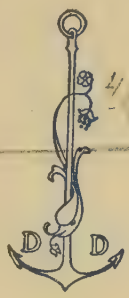

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CONTENTS

	PAGE
TOWARD A BETTER WORLD	1
THE SEARCH OF THE AGES	31
THE CHRIST OF THE ANDES	52
THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD	68
CHRIST OF THE DOORSTEP	86
SPRINGTIDE	119
THE STABLE DOOR	138
PRECIOUS PROMISES	158
THE GARDENER	177
AS A MOTHER	198
THE NAME SUPERNAL	215
ULTIMATE SOVEREIGNTY	233

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TOWARD A BETTER WORLD

TOWARD A BETTER WORLD

But now they desire a better country, that is an heavenly. —Heb. 11 : 16.

THIS is a beautiful world—indescribably beautiful. Its architectural grandeur and its artistic design, revealing the incomparable genius of its Creator, pale into insignificance the best accomplishments of man. Its mountains of rock, lifting above castles of cloud their sun-crowned heads, level to the dust the most magnificent productions of the sculptor's chisel. Its blend of harmonious colouring in bird's wing, in sky blue, in snow crystal and beach coral, bewilder the wildest fancies of the painter's brush. Its captivating music, throbbing through the heart of the hills, is beyond comparison with that of the master musicians of all ages. At every turn of its winding path we are confronted with some indisputable evidence of a Creator's mind and a

Father's love. The mountains, whose feet the springs wash while their hands hold on to the sky, as though they stood there to bind Earth and Heaven together; the valleys abloom with leaf and floweret and awave with harvest; the earth, with all the priceless treasures hidden within it; the springs, the rivers, the lakes, the islands, the seas: each contribute its feature to this grand and glorious world.

ALL NATURE DIRECTS US TO HEAVEN

The waters caught by the warm hands of the sun are lifted skyward. Myriad wings from dale and forest soar heavenward. The flowers lift their starlike eyes to the vast expanse above them. The trees in their unfolding beauty climb upward. All nature unites in testimony that this world is but the stage of a journey—a better world the goal; only a crossing—a better world the home, ten thousand times a better. Were I to exhaust the adjectives of every language in attempt to show the superiority of the world toward which I travel over the one in which I find myself, even then I should fail

to describe the incomparable beauty of the "Better Country" of my text.

MAN POINTING THERE

Man in his restless and unsatisfied cravings proves that he was created for something better. God gave to the world two lights. One for the earth—the sun.

Standing at my office window, I saw the sun, with fingers of flame, painting on the sky groups of white angels in robes of amber fastening with crimson ribbons the black mantle of the night; and I thought, "This is God's artist—the sun—drawing pictures in the firmament, and reaching down to kiss the blush upon the rosebud's cheek." The sun—Heaven's best gift and earth's one hope—a world's life, warmth, beauty, and light. Light for the rich, peering through silken tapestry; light for the poor, creeping through garret casement; light for the wanderer afloat on the sea; light for the hermit's hut; light for the vision dimmed by age; light for the prince's coronet; light for the pauper's needle. We do not need to climb

the mountain peak to catch its brilliance. Coming down the ladder of the morning it bathes with glory the mud puddles in the lowest places of the great city.

The other light—the Conscience—God gave to the world for the guidance of man.

THE LIGHT THAT SHOWS THE WAY

Brilliant as is that burning orb, the sun in the firmament, it is possible to elude its rays. We can hide in tunnels, descend into the bowels of the earth or exclude its beam from our habitations; but there is no way of escape from the blaze of the lamp that burns in the heart—the Conscience.

Man was created in the image of God, and the conscience is the God-part of him, revealing God, pointing to God, bringing in God, speaking of God, everywhere declaring God. The penetrating power of the X-ray is feeble in contrast with the force of that searchlight piercing its way into all the chambers of a man's soul, his wastes of dissipation, and his haunts of sorrow. It is there—a light un-

dimmed—until extinguished by the first cold breath from the valley of death.

Boundless Mercy appointed an angel with flaming sword to guard

THE TREE OF LIFE

lest man should eat of it and forever live in his misery. Infinite Love appointed an angel at the gate of every soul—Conscience—to protect that soul from sin and its consequent sorrows.

Who is there that does not know it? Who is there that has not proved its compelling force, its inherent power to survive every effort turned to its destruction? It is stronger than argument, stronger than creed, stronger than prayerbook, stronger than love, stronger even than the Bible: twin angel of the flaming sword.

Oh, what hours we all have spent alone in controversy with it! What stifling of it when with the crowd! When evil, with its stealthy feet, creeps to the door of the soul; when alluring temptation, with eloquent tongue, pleads its entrance, Conscience cries: "Do not con-

sider it; do not allow it; it will hurt you. It will wreck your happiness; it will stain your garments; it will write in your record indelible memories; it will ceaselessly follow you; it will torture your soul; it will shadow your life; it will darken your dying hour. It is sin—and if only one sin, as much to be dreaded as a multitude; for sin, like a carrion crow, never comes alone; it always has a flock in its train. If you open the door to the one, the others will fly in with it. Oh, this guardian angel—Conscience!

No moment in life but that the heart is with it or against it. It can be wounded, cramped, seared; but it cannot be destroyed. It is the gift of God to man to guide him upward, and how bitter and long the conflict to drag to Hell a soul that was born for Heaven!

Sitting on the curb of a London gutter a young girl with torn and bleeding feet and tattered garb, whose face had lost none of its winsome fairness because of its exceptional sorrow, lifted upon the foul air of the alley in a voice of infinite sweetness:

There is a better world, they say,
  Oh, so bright! oh, so bright!
Where sin and woe are done away,
  Oh, so bright! oh, so bright!
There music fills the balmy air,
And angels with bright wings are there,
And harps of gold and mansions fair—
  Oh, so bright! oh, so bright!

So amid foul surroundings, illegitimate pleasures, and evil practices, when the heart has forgotten, the lip become merry, and the mind gay; when evil appetite—whether for the cup or the gambling table—has been strong; when Godless amusement or worldly pleasure has triumphed over purity and truth and justice—Conscience with sword aflame has sprung to the gate and cried,

"WHAT ABOUT YOUR FORSAKEN BIBLE?"

What about your violated vows, your desecrated principles? What about your mother's prayers? What about your hurrying away to judgment? The shining of that glittering sword

has flashed and reflashed, bedazzling the way as lightning piercing the storm-swept clouds, and we stop, not seeing where next to place our feet.

So Conscience blazes out in the darkness of the road, revealing that each step will lead to a deeper and deeper night—nearer and nearer the eternal plunge—the awful abyss which can never be fathomed; and all through the ever darkening way the guardian angel has pleaded,

STAY, YOUNG HEART—STAY—AND THINK!

Stay, Father; the snow of life's winter has fallen upon thy brow; thou art swinging in the balance of Time and Judgment. Stay, thou who art in the prime of life; thou art forging the connecting link between an everlasting past and a never-ending future. Let go the pleasures of sin; if sweet to-day, bitter to-morrow; if happy now, wretched hereafter; after the sunshiny weather, smooth sailing, the balmy breezes, there will be a hurricane of tears, regrets, disillusionments, heartbreaks—

beating thy bark, ripping the flag of reputation, tearing to shreds the rigging of all prospects, splitting the keel of foundation principles. . . . Wrecked in the swirling gale! Shipwrecked for time—shipwrecked for eternity!

Does someone ask if Conscience sleeps? Sleep, did you say?—your Conscience was sleeping? How long has it slept? Can you live in a Christian country and your Conscience be asleep? Can the church bells ring out; can the blest hymn—"Rock of Ages"—creep out through stained-glass window and resound on street corner; can innocence in the eyes of childhood laugh, and your Conscience be asleep? In the never-ending procession of the hearse, in the silent crowding of the cemeteries, does not your Conscience hear the muffled tramp on, and on, to

THE GREAT BEYOND?

You may have gone a long way down the dark track, and your heart once tender and

sensitive to questions of right or wrong become callous and hard; but I am quite confident you have found it a thorny, tearing road for the feet. At every turn in the decline, God has thrown some obstacle in the way—some memory cutting to the quick; some sting upon the shoulders from the lash of guilt; some blow to heart, to brain, or home; some defilement of a treasured virtue, leaving remorse seated upon the vacated throne of love; some heart-break, some dead face: these are the barriers thrown up by Conscience, though crushed and bruised, but which, in the strength of its eternal life, has made it harder to go to Hell than any carrying of the Cross of Christ will make it hard to go to Heaven.

Oh, Man! Too great! Too vast! Too truly God-made to bring about without a terrible struggle his own destruction. Man! greater than the earth; longer lived than Time! The stars will fall, but he will stand. Worlds shall be done away with, but he will remain. Eternity his lifetime, God his Judge, Jesus Christ his Saviour, and Heaven his home.

VOICES FROM HEAVEN CALLING US THERE

How can Heaven seem so far away when so many loved ones watch us at its gates? When the baby passed through the Valley it seemed only a step. In fact, so short was the distance that as the Portals of Paradise opened to welcome the spirit bright, the light streamed out upon our tear-stained faces. And some have never seemed quite to lose it.

I have met those whose cold, stern countenances have been transfigured since their children passed into that warm, kind land, as though gleams of glory escaped through gates by tiny fingers held ajar.

Do you not remember, when you made a pillow of flowers for the sweet fair head, how real you felt Heaven to be?—how near!—so near, that as you pressed hot kisses on the still, cold lips you said, "Mother will soon be there, Mother will soon be there." Can the little voices ever cease calling? Can the discords of life ever drown their music? Can the photograph of the starlike eyes and the dimpled chin

hung in your heart ever become so dusty and worn with earth's uphill climbing as to still the voice that's calling? No, no! You don't need to find the little shoes or look at the left playthings or open the drawer where the unused clothes lie. No! heartless as the world may be thought, I have found that the rumble of life's machinery, the thunder of its calamities, the pressure of its claims, or the moan of its sorrows cannot drown those sky voices.

But the voice that speaks with deepest pathos is that of a mother. Some think her gentle pleading tones were silenced long ago, that others had filled their place. There may be things in the world likely to sweep away her memory, yet how could they? Who or what can be as she, or take her place? Can money with its exacting demands, so hard to get; can the world, with its best treasures, so empty; can friends who have interests other than ours; can amusements which always remain behind dropped curtains or sink beneath waxed floors; can even the children take *her* place? At the close of day they nestle upon our

shoulder and tell us their troubles—of the doll's eye fallen in or the horse's leg fallen out, and we wish *our* mother were there that we might tell out our troubles as freely—just in the same unaffected manner—how some of our pretty things have crumpled, how hopes have fallen! She always listened, always understood, always saw the best side in us, and most admired any of our accomplishments. Our errings—well, with abundant mercy she covered them, and by her tears and entreaties, and often by her sacrifices, did her best to heal up the sore places they had made.

Who can fill her place? No matter who sits in that chair, it will always be empty; who strokes back the curl from the brow, the touch will always be different. The doctor, intensely kind, professionally interested, could not detect the hectic flush as soon as she; neither could dear Father, who thought the world of his boy, hear the cough as quickly. It was Mother—and believe me, her voice can never be silent. No matter what honours you won or what changes took place, she never called

you any other than George or Frank or Alice, and if a thousand people said your name at the same moment, you would know which was Mother's voice. Can you not hear it calling now?

HE WOULD LEAVE HOME; HE WOULD GO!

The gray-haired mother, her brow deeply furrowed, her shoulders rounded, her step needing a strong arm to lean upon, said: "Well, George, you know you promised when your father died that you would remain with me; anyway, that you would be a dutiful son, and do what you could to fill the breach"—her voice breaking—"perhaps there are some little changes I could arrange"—contemplating new sacrifices, and the spending of more of her savings—"to make the country life a little brighter for you."

But all this lovely thoughtfulness was wasted; the boy *would* go. Some false fancy filled his brain, and tempted by companions he left home for the far Northwest.

Years passed away. The brave little mother

could not breast the storm of heartbreak, desolation, and poverty, and the day came when she said: "I am dying. I have been told there is a machine into which I can speak, and by which I can speak again when I am gone."

The machine was brought, and she was held up on the pillows to talk into the phonograph. Life was far spent and the effort cost her great pain. The voice was broken, the sentence disconnected by paroxysms of coughing, and the little man who operated the phonograph was so moved that only with the greatest difficulty could he control his emotion. Then the mother, asking the phonograph operator to join her, prayed that the record should reach her boy; and God gave to it an angel's wing that bore it straight to him.

Far away in the West, a man dealing in phonographs tells the sequel of the story:

"I was givin' an exhibition in Arizona, and a rough but handsome fellow took a great notion to me and my machine. He came and listened to everythin' that I had and paid me several dollars at times, and yet he didn't

seem to care for the music. One night he began askin' me questions about the machine, and after a while he inquired if the records were all the same size and if any would fit my machine. I told him they were, and he went away.

"The next night he came in and asked me if for five dollars I would try his records, shut the door, and let no one else in.

"I was a little scared. He said: 'I only want the door shut for a little while, but I don't want anyone else lis'nin' to the machine talk.' He looked kind of wistful and I agreed to his proposal, shut and locked the door, came back to my machine. Then the man opened a box carrying two phonograph records carefully packed. He said, 'I want to hear these,' and handed the box over to me as if he were afraid to touch 'em. I put the record marked No. 1 on the machine. I hadn't much more than started the motor when I heard a woman's voice, gentle-like and weak, sayin': 'George, my poor lost boy, I will not be alive when you

come home, and I want to talk to you before I die. I want to tell you that the door has always been open and'—heavy coughing—'my love is always the same.'

"I caught on that it was somethin' private then, and pretended like not to take much notice; but I couldn't help watchin' my customer, and I see the tears runnin' down his face, and in a minute he put his head down on the table, and I could see him shake all over with the sobs he was tryin' to keep down. When the cylinder was through he never looked up, but I took the record off and put on No. 2. When that run out he was cryin' like a baby, and just made a motion with his hands for me to put 'em through again.

"After I had run 'em off five times, he got quiet, and said: 'If I could only talk to her now!' 'Who?' says I. 'My mother,' said he; 'that's my mother talkin'.' Then I packed the two records. 'Be careful,' says he, 'I will go back all the way East and listen to 'em on her grave,' and he took 'em away.

"The Salvation Army folks told me after-

ward that this man had come in to the meetin' and went straight up to the mourner's bench and knelt down and cried out loud for mercy and pardon. They prayed with him and he got what they call 'converted.' They said he went right to talkin', tellin' how well he'd been brought up, and how he had gone wrong and wandered around until he got news of his mother's death, and then the box came and the message from his mother.

"I tell you what! When I think of those two records and that lost boy comin' home, I feel like takin' my machine and joinin' the Army or travellin' around the world gettin' records from folks whose boys or husbands or brothers have gone away, and then huntin' for the folks they talked to. I'd rather help to get a feller feelin' like he wanted to quit his meanness, like Sam Jones says, than to make a thousand dollars."

Oh, what exquisite intermingling of Earth and Heaven! Divine and human working for the salvation of this man!

If one who reads this is praying for a way-

ward child, I would say: Don't give up; all Heaven is on your side. When a heart goes into the wilderness to find a lost one for the Kingdom, the love of Divinity comes down to show Nature's love the way. The two meet and join hands, interweave a chain, and to every link of human love there are ten thousand links of the Divine until there is no depth of sin and depravity, no chasm of heartbreak and life-wreck that it cannot reach and, reaching, then all the chains forged in the furnace of Golgotha agony take hold, while angel and seraph and archangel with one stupendous Heaven-echoing, earth-reaching, heart-thrilling shout, cry; "Up, up, up!" and the soul is lifted and saved.

Oh, this great, limitless, measureless, everlasting love of God sweeping all space; covering all differences; loving all sinners!

Love surpassing understanding!
  Angels would thy mystery scan;
Yet so tender that it reaches
  To the lowest child of man.

Love that comes flooding down from the streets of light to the mud walks of earth, coming to find man in his deepest depths, that it may lift him to its highest height before the shades of eternal night darken the sky of his

DAY OF GRACE.

The world is ever repeating the inquiry, "What is religion?" I have the answer: Religion is a life in harmony with the will of God. It permeates everything; it is of no value unless it moulds and governs every circumstance of life.

Neither Earth nor Heaven has any use for a religion that is like a best jacket—hung on the back on the Sabbath, and hung in the cupboard through the week; that which is beautiful in the pew, but useless in the kitchen; that can go with a man to church on Sunday, but cannot go to the store on Monday lest it interfere with the sale of the goods. Genuine religion is equally applicable to prince and to peasant, to master and to servant; it controls

the merchant, it scrutinizes his balance sheets, it verifies his statements concerning his merchandise. It makes an honest lawyer, and restrains him from a false presentation of his case. It compels the contractor to spread between the bricks well-tempered mortar rather than unslaked lime. It guarantees "the advertising tongue" of the fishmonger as well as "fresh fish." It keeps the wealthy from oppressing the poor and incites the poor to do the best they can. It enshrines in the human breast the heart of a Saviour, and inspires—John Howards for the dungeons; Florence Nightingales for the wounded; Elizabeth Frys for the prisoners; Shaftesburys for the costermongers; Frances Willards for the fallen; and William Booths for the downtrodden and oppressed of every land and clime.

FAITH, THE ONLY WAY OVER WHICH WE CAN TRAVEL

The condition on which we can reach our heavenly home is the same as that of the social structure of our present life, and it is unalter-

able. Eliminate the faith that man has in man, and the commercial wheel halts.

We could no longer in confidence travel by sea. We would suspect the shipwright that laid the keel of the vessel; we would eye with suspicion the captain who walks the bridge at midnight; we would question the pilot's knowledge of the rocks and his ability to steer us through the "Narrows."

We could no more in assurance of comfort travel by land. We would worry lest the engine driver might be colour-blind and incompetent to watch and obey the signals; we would imagine that the signal man might be asleep at his post.

Stores, banks, warehouses, factories, institutions of every imaginable description, would hang their blinds and empty their rooms; while a Bolshevik world, in want and hunger, to the tune of the Dead March, would tramp to the funeral of its suicide.

If by faith we travel over the commercial, industrial, social, and domestic highways of this world, should we wonder or question or be

confused if only by faith we can make our way over the highway to Heaven?

If by faith we come into possession of earthly things, should we think God's way unreasonable and hard that makes faith the only possible way by which we can obtain eternal things?—things out of reach of mortal hands; things unseen by finite vision; things unobtainable by trustless, philosophical reasoning or by skeptical and impatient peerings through gates that God has locked to unbelief: for they are things so transcendently real, so unearthly fair, so divinely precious, that they can be seen, reached, and appropriated by Faith alone.

Faith, the one link between the soul and truth;

Faith, the most potent force in the realm of thought;

Faith, the chief corner stone in the temple of virtue;

Faith, the spiritual eye that, piercing the clouds, can see God in the dark; that can perceive eternal realities unseen by the natural eye;

Faith, the hand that can wave aside bewildering trial and every opposition, and commit to God's omnipotent arm the soul's burden;

Faith, the traveller's guide that, by its own light reflected, can lead through paths of gloom to the city whither he is bound—

A BETTER WORLD.

No foundation for the church, no salvation for the sinner, no solace for the dying pillow, no harbour for the sorrow-beaten, no father for the orphan—no God, no Christ, no Heaven, without *Faith.*

"But," you ask, "is Faith practicable?" Yes, it is the only thing that is. Feeling is splendid. I am very fond of feeling. I believe that under the power of feeling fifty per cent. of the world's best deeds are performed, but storms may wreck it; sight is precious, but midnight blinds it. Faith creates its own emotions and carries its own lamp. Thousands have had it, exercised it, proved it, and by it won Heaven.

THINK OF THE MARTYRS!

Oh! what a wondrous, helping, precious saving faith! Taking the tear out of lion's teeth, taking the burn out of furnace flame, making endurable a thousand inhuman tortures.

I see them, young and fair in the Springtime of life; I see them, old and feeble—trembling in its late Winter. Some say: "I come, Lord Jesus!" Some: "Into Thy hands I commit my spirit!" Some: "O Lord God of Truth, Thou hast redeemed me!"

Oh! what upholding, sustaining, conquering arms are found in this faith, making the weakest mighty, and even the children great.

Look at Nero and his merciless crowd of unbelievers gathered to feast their eyes upon helpless agony! They could not fail to catch a gleam of the glory into which their victims were about to pass. The faces of their accusers, distorted by diabolical spite, change their expression into questioning wonderment as they witness the saints of God die in the peace in

which they lived. They wonder whence the glory that shines upon the dying face; upon what rock do their feet stand, that they tremble not in this their hour of martyrdom? It is the light of Faith beaming. They cry—"O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?"

THE BETTER WORLD IS THE REWARD OF THE SAINTS

The Better World is the home as well as the sure reward for the faithful unto death. They may have dreary and disappointing experience on earth: hard toil for the hands, sickness of the body, anxiety at the home, patched clothes on the back, and, maybe, rejected love in the heart; but neither principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall close against them the gates of

THE BETTER WORLD.

If a man maintains his faith in an unerring God, all the grinding poverty that ever

crowded a man into a garret cannot keep him from the mansion prepared for him; all the sorrows that ever tore apart the strings of the human heart cannot bereave the spirit of the coming jubilancy of the Marriage Supper of the Lamb; all the demons that were ever permitted to besiege and fight for the soul cannot rob it of one thrill of the captivating joy that awaits him upon the threshold of that land.

There will be no feet that, however tired, shall go haltingly within those portals; no eyes, so dim with watching, that they shall fail to see the King in his beauty.

Comparatively few on earth rise to positions of distinction and honour. The majority of wrestling humanity travel the low levels; decorations of medal and ribbon are reserved for the few. In the Better World there will be a throne for each, a crown for each, a royal robe for each, a palm for each; and yet, though that be the common inheritance, there will be for each a separate, abundant, and promised reward, compensating for every loss, every tear, and every sacrifice.

A French ship, beating for long months in the storms of Southern seas, thrilled one morning from bow to stern with the cry—"Land, land!"

Passengers rushed on deck, crew rushed on deck, the worn countenance of the Captain brightened into hope; but the outlines were vague—the uncertainty seemed to make the hours lengthen into days. Was it land? If so, what land? Was it France? Could it be France, or was it a strange country? After much straining of eyes, and the exhausting of arm muscles holding sea glasses, there rang through the vessel a shout that tingled the ears of the smallest cabin boy. "France, France—it is *France!*"

So with far more enthusiasm and joy it will be with us after the beating on the seas of life, after passing through the narrows of death; the cry will not be—"France!" but "Heaven, Heaven! It is *Heaven!*"

Ended all strife and sorrow. At last the shining shore, the harbour of peace, the

BETTER WORLD.

The widow throws off her widowhood.

Parents cry, "I see the children coming!"

Orphans, no more loneliness and weeping, shout: "There is Mother! There is Father!"

No more hunger, no more death, no more tears, no more parting, no more grave opening, no more heart tearing!

IT IS HEAVEN!

Heaven—the Heaven promised the righteous; Heaven—the home of the pure; Heaven—the Better Land!

Can you not catch something of the Glory, as through portals of streaming light and interlacing garlands of fadeless beauty and outspread wing of glistening angel there passes into their eternal home the numberless procession of the cross bearers, the redeemed by the Blood, the blessers of the poor, the upholders of truth, the preachers of righteousness?

IT IS HEAVEN.

Heaven, ablaze with the brightest light that ever shone, aspray with the pearliest fountains

that ever showered, ablush with the fairest flowers that ever bloomed, aring with the hosannahs of the redeemed—the sweetest music ever heard—joy in the presence of angels of God, the song of the Harvest Home.

IT IS HEAVEN, THE UNSHADOWED HOME OF THE CHILDREN OF GOD, HEAVEN.

THE SEARCH OF THE AGES

When ye shall search for me with all your heart, I will be found of you, saith the Lord—Jer. 29: 13, 14.

SOME of the most-to-be-prized and most beautiful of material gifts are bestowed upon us apart from our seeking or asking. Day after day they bestrew our path—recurring declarations of the abounding goodness and generosity of the Creator toward the creature. Sad to say, we too often carelessly garner the gifts, forgetting our gratitude to the Giver!

Antedating all other, and before the earth emerged from its yeasty waters, came the gift of

LIGHT

without which nothing that is, could be: no odour for the flower, no mantle for the hills, no song for the birds, no coral for the sea-bathed rocks, no glory for the sky.

Oh, how great a gift is light!—so vast in its prolific qualities; earth's parent of both petty and powerful element. The sweet and alluring promise of Heaven is—"There shall be no night there."

Again, we have that most merciful of all nature's ministers

SLEEP.

We cannot estimate the worth of this benediction, soothing in its cradle the whole human family and putting to rest each living thing. Hushed upon its bosom, the saddest and sorest find their sustenance for the morrow's waking. In the sweet oblivion of its harmless opiate the suffering lose their pains. Anchored within the calm of its haven, the troubled rest from care. Rocked in its maternal arms, the orphan dries her tear. Oh sleep, the fount that refills Nature's emptied cup; the source of the exhaustless springs that recuperate energies spent in waking hours! Sweet sleep, the shadow of the last long sleep, in which, at the close of Life's day, the righteous lose all earth's weari-

ness, and find recuperation of every power for the waking on a morrow eternal.

Then, God has counteracted the discords of life with the music of the spheres. Without hearing, there is no sound; without sound, there is no hearing. How wonderful the counteracting agencies of God!

Great orchestras, by the skilful manipulation of instruments and exquisite interpretation of the composer's sentiments, hold vast audiences spellbound and sway their emotions. Military bands, with martial strains, have inspired dispirited troops and renewed the courage of lagging soldiers. But what artists can be compared to those whom God files into the galleries of the forest to play the Wedding March as all Nature breaks forth into the song of a new love to mate with Spring—the world's bridal morning? What notes so perfect? What strains so sweet? What harmonies so rich as those the feathery musicians lift? The moans and sobs and sighs of Earth are stilled by those musical voices which, thrilling with celestial song, bring Heaven and its melody to where we

are. Such music, as that of David's harp calming the disordered mind of Saul, drowns the discords of earth and chimes with the harmonies of Heaven.

Music, blessing us in our waking, through cottage lattice or palatial casement; soothing us with its lullabies at eventide, whether young or old, prince or pauper, since, like the sunlight, it is God-given, and God is not partial.

HE HAS PUT JEWELS INTO GROUND PITS

as well as on celestial gates, and made this world for the poorest peasant so surpassingly beautiful that, but for sin and sorrow, we should get bewildered and think Earth was Heaven.

Then, there are the lessons God has sketched upon the landscape. Doré, Schmalz, Tissot, have thrown on to canvas some magnificent productions which will evoke praise and admiration as long as the ages roll, and which have been both an education and a blessing to countless numbers. But what masterpiece of artist's brush or sculptor's chisel can so arrest

the eye, so fascinate the mind, so melt the heart, so bless the soul as the picture of a Springtide morning which "comes down from God out of Heaven prepared as a bride adorned for her husband"?

Who could describe a Spring morning? The rising sun shooting its shafts of flame across the eastern sky! The dew swinging in the cradle of the branches and the light coming down to kiss it! The water torrent, striking its crystal heels against its pebbled path, leaping from crag to crag, like deer in the chase! A myriad of flowers breakfasting at the brook in their brilliant dresses of purple and gold, and the water lily lifting her cup to cloudlets sashed in the ribbons of the rainbow. Every rose a very carnival of colour—every leaf a creature of beauty—every flower a perfection—every bird a praise—every tree a psalm—every upturned petal a prayer.

O that we who have sermons to preach and sermons to write and sermons to live would learn our lessons from Nature's great commentary! The one that God has stretched between

sky and soil! The theology that drenches the soul in the dew of the morning and floods the heart with the nectar of the honeysuckle is the best interpreter of God the Creator.

While there is much that is desirable and necessary to us that cannot be ours without our industriously seeking, yet there are wondrous and multitudinous blessings within our reach, right at our door, contributing to our happiness and prosperity; blessings that our own hand could never bring, that are given to us without our labour and without our seeking.

But the text declares that for spiritual blessing the reverse is the inexorable and unalterable law. For these blessings there must be an earnest search, an absorbing hunger, an importunate prayer.

From the dawn of the Christian era, from the hour Redemption's Lamb bridged the gulf 'twixt God and man, from the time the rent tomb and burst grave declared a Resurrection Morning, every saving factor of Salvation's plan has been bound round with the inflexible condition that to find you must seek, to enter

you must knock, to drink of living fountains you must come, to possess the Kingdom you must surrender. No promise in the Bible, no drop of Blood on Calvary, no God, no Christ, no Heaven for those who will not search!

This is the price to be paid for His treasures—not the price of gold, as demanded by the bondmen to buy their ransom; not the price of blood as asked by the god of the heathen to purchase pardon; not the price of torture as exacted by superstitious creed to atone for heart errings; but the reward Divine, eternal, is offered for a search, and a search with the whole heart.

While the text gives but one condition with which the soul must comply in its search for God, and that condition is simple, yet it is absolute and unchangeable. It is because these two factors are so little apprehended that more souls miss finding God through their mistaken thought of search than through looking for Him in mistaken places. If we will but seek for Him with the whole heart, as did Mary of Magdala, although we may mistake the place,

as did she, and go to the grave where He is not, He will put Himself in our way and reveal Himself to us as to her.

Doubtless if God had said, "When ye shall search for Me with the whole head I will be found of you," a much larger number would be found in the pursuit. It is so much easier to give the head than the heart—a mere mental bargain which offers but one faculty of the being, and which in its single capacity for reasoning is immeasurably inferior to the spirit embracing every great and noble impulse. The command that the search should be with the whole heart evokes the finest qualities and the deepest emotions of the creature in his seeking for God.

Had the search depended upon ordinary gift or talent, some would have had ten thousand times the chance of others, and the reward be won more by what we inherited than by what we merited. Those who had exceptional ability to reason, to think, and to philosophize would have entered the contest and reached the goal, but the seething masses of unlearned and

depraved, with their undeveloped intellects and uneducated minds, would have made terrible havoc trying to find Him, and would have been hopelessly behind in the race. Here is the great mistake so many make. They seek for Jesus with the head instead of with the heart. Many look for Him in philosophical and theological books, hunt for Him through the avenues of ponderous volumes, and make the search a mental question. Many study religion instead of finding it. Many learn to quote rather than to live it. Seeking—seeking all the time—but seeking for Him in the wrong way. Jesus is not a library, but a Spirit, bursting grave-bonds, and it is only the feet swift with burning passion of the heart that can find Him.

We must seek Him with the "whole heart" —that is, an undivided heart. Herein is warning of a snare into which many fall. They make a calculation of what they are and what they possess; they divide their interest, giving part to the Kingdom and part to the world. But God declines to accept part. He only accepts

all; and therefore it is impossible to seek Him in a manner to find Him when the ambitions of the soul are centred upon the world and upon selfish gain. The divided interest makes the search imperfect. You cannot serve God and Mammon; neither can you expect to find God when you have some other object in view. Eternal treasures are not thrown in our way to impoverish us, but to enrich us. Priceless gems are not mingled with tawdry jewels. We must banish every intruder that would challenge a share in His place; we must seek Him with "a single eye," an all-absorbing thirst that cannot be quenched at any other fount.

The whole heart means an undeviating heart —a heart centred upon a single object; one that refuses to be errant or excursive, and is bent only and persistently upon obtaining its desire. It is not to be diverted by any other object. It is not to be stimulated by any unlooked-for emergency. Some, under the influence of an emotional address, or torn by an unexpected bereavement, or stripped by a reverse in fortune, have begun the search. They

have wanted God and, finding He was not in the house, they have looked out through the lattice of their soul, across their surrounding circumstances and through the circle of their friends and, failing to find Him there or anywhere else, they have given up the search. Other claims have pressed in and, like the waves on the sandy shore, have effaced the impress of God's Spirit. We cannot expect to find God by spasmodic or periodical reflections. It is only the whole-souled cry He will answer. It is only to the intent and violent that He will give the Kingdom. In response to the resolute, indomitable, and inexorable will to find Him, He will put Himself in our way.

A THIRSTING HEART

"They that thirst after righteousness shall be filled." An insatiable thirst will produce the greatest suffering the human frame can endure. Those who have mastered the marvellous mechanism of the physical frame, with all its complicated parts and delicate adjustments, tell us that the most agonizing death is that of

thirst. That was the bitter drop in the cup Christ drank to the dregs when upon the Cross He died for us.

Who can fathom the depth of agony in the cry—"I thirst!" Every capacity possessed by the human frame to want is taxed to the last degree when we thirst. The mind, the heart, the soul, the quivering nerves, unite in one imploring outcry for relief.

The poor man in the desert, staggering across burning sands in despairing search for the stream, can only think, see, hear, say or feel—water! His brain becomes a boiling caldron; his eyes, circles of blood; his tongue, a swollen, scorched fang; his lips, parched particles of blistered membrane; his skin, dried atoms of sand. Every want other than water is obliterated. Every other thought is dead. In agonizing, dumb appeal the sole plea is for—water! Nothing else but water. No other thing will suffice—no food—no pearls—no money—no precious stones—nothing but water. Water! WATER! And unless he can find the stream he falls upon the stifling sands and perishes.

So should the soul search after God—with that burning and consuming thirst that at no other fount can be slaked. When so sought, every other pursuit is abandoned, every other aim is forgotten, every other interest loses its attraction, every other treasure is depreciated. Whereas religion has been a secondary consideration, it is now all in all. When we start with a determined step toward Heaven, we soon see that the world, at its best, is but a transitory place, a passing dream, a broken cistern, a temporal well in contrast with the Eternal—the finite with the Infinite.

WE MUST SEEK HIM WITH FAITH,

not doubtingly, but believingly, claiming His promises, relying upon His Word that He will be found of us. The way may be very dark when we start the search, blocked up with innumerable difficulties—difficulties which our wrongdoings in the past crowd in upon us; difficulties by which our present circumstances entangle our way; difficulties we encounter with our ungodly relations; difficulties in the

hard struggle to maintain a living; difficulties by which the future is overcast, with its uncertain and untrodden paths. Yet we must seek Him with a faith which believes that, unworthy though we are, if we seek Him with the whole heart He will be true to His Word and will be found of us.

Some will have to look for Him through the shadowed vistas of a terrible past; some through the choking fogs of skeptical doubts; some through the thorny paths of poverty and heartbreak; and only the believing heart will find Him at the end of the journey.

THE CONDITION IS NOT THE PLACE, BUT THE SEARCH

We may even look for Him in mistaken places; we may, as Mary, in our confusion of grief and doubt, seek Him where He is not. Possibly through wrong teaching in childhood's years we may hunt for Him through the tedious ways of empty form, or even in places where Christ is as little likely to be as He was in the grave. But if our search is sin-

cere, if our whole heart is in it, if we are looking for Him and Him only, He will, as He did with Mary, put Himself in our way—He will come out to meet us. He may not come just in the way or wearing the clothes we expect, but He will come. He will be found of us. Even though we look for Him in the back kitchen, or at the street corner, or in the midst of our daily occupation, or on a sick bed with none to help us, He will just as really and quickly and completely reward our search as He would were we engaged in the hunt in a church pew under the most forceful sermon ever delivered.

I have seen men find him where the shepherds did—in the barn; where Paul did—on horseback; where Mary of Magdala did—in the garden; where the jailer did—in prison. I have seen men find Him on the seas, in the forests, down in the mines, and in the most accursed places outside Hell. I saw a man find Him on his knees in a saloon, with his head on the bar over which he had bartered all his life's happiness. No spot on earth where Christ will not come to meet us if we will only seek Him

with a heart that so thirsts that it will go to any spot on earth to find Him. It is not where, it is *how* we seek. If there is any particular place where we lost Him, there must we go to find Him. That is why Mary went to the grave. He was not there, but it was there she had lost Him; and so she came back with her breaking heart to find him, and He was found of her. If you know at what part of the journey you lost Him, for what sin you sacrificed Him, it is there you must seek Him, and there you will find Him.

I heard of a man who looked for a million dollars and found ten million. But here is a rewarded search which gives everything—wealth which can never perish, joy which can never cease, beauty which can never fade, life which can never die—Christ risen—a Resurrection morning, an everlasting day, an Eternal Springtide!

Oh, what a finding! Oh, what a finding! The Winter—with its storm beating and wind-scourging and frost-stinging—gone! Spring—with "the singing of birds"—come!

In the country we hear the singing and dancing and frisking of all the animal creation. Birds chanting their love-song on the branches, the ants racing up and down the hillock, the squirrel larking with the chipmunk, the frog whirring in the millpond. We catch in every note, in every sound, "The Winter gone, the Spring come!" So on that new morning, that wondrously glad hour which breaks in upon the soul when it finds Jesus, there are a million awakenings of spiritual Springtide. Where life was hard, and to serve others an irksome business, life is easy and to live for others the soul's greatest delight. Where the earth was a cold, dreary place, with nothing pleasing to us, it is a wonderfully beautiful place, full of the goodness of God. Everything is changed exactly in the same way that everything changed for Mary at that open grave when she found Jesus.

WE SHALL FIND A GREAT FRIEND

There are very few words in the English language more beautiful than friend. It means

there is somebody there to help you when you need help most. It means so much. It means there is someone to care for you when perhaps in your own opinion you are the least worthy of being cared for. It means there is somebody who thinks a lot of you because of what you are, not because of what you have, or look, or sound, or seem. It means somebody who loves you, not because of what he can get out of you, but more because of what he can give to you. It means somebody who will not misjudge you, although he will not always understand you. It means somebody who will be faithful to you and help you to the best of his ability, to the end. But there are very few in our day who are worthy of the full meaning of the name. Many start to befriend us; they promise they will do so, and we expect it of them and reckon upon it; but something happens which changes them, or perhaps they change without the something happening, and when we want them most—when trouble comes, when the children die, or they grow up to disappoint us, or our health fails, or

233003

through misfortune we become poor, or our good looks are gone, and the grave isn't far off—just when we want them most they have changed toward us, and we do not feel at liberty to turn to them.

But "What a Friend we have in Jesus!"—such a friend! A Friend who will never change—a Friend who, having put our hand in His, will hold it until we kiss the nail-pierced palm in The Morning. He will walk the journey with us, every step. He will be no less tender at the last than at the beginning. He will always understand our wants and feelings. He will never be too far off to hear or to attend or to help, and through life's last river He will bear us in the Arms which have never failed us since we fell into them on the Easter morning of our soul.

WE SHALL FIND IN HIM A GREAT LOVE

—a love which will make every other treasure appear poor and paltry; a love which, when we read it on His face, and feel it in His touch and drink it from His lips as He tells us its

story of how Heaven could not hold it; of how Calvary, with its onslaught of hammer and nail, spear and spike, could not kill it; of how the hatred and spite that beat up against His Cross in one foaming wrathful surge could not change it, we shall feel something of how inestimable is the worth of the Christ, who went all the way from Bethlehem to Jerusalem, to Golgotha, to the grave, to the right hand of the Father, there to abide the Intercessor of those who seek for Him with the whole heart.

WE SHALL FIND IN HIM A SAVIOUR

He will do for us what no other could do.

We have friends who will nurse us if we are sick; who will give us money if we are poor and without resource to meet our debts; who will mourn with us if we are bereaved; who will lift our spirits with loving assurances if we are distressed; who with their mental and physical powers will help us to battle the contrary currents of life. But no other than Christ can pardon our sins.

As a thick cloud He will blot out our trans-

gressions, forgiving all our sins—every one—those which have caused us the greatest agony. "Though they be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool."

His Redeeming blood will blot out the dark spots that sin has stained into our character, retrieve the losses that our sins have caused, banish from our faces the gloom that our sins have cast, and transfigure our features into the likeness of His glory.

THE CHRIST OF THE ANDES

Peace through the blood of his cross—Colossians 1 : 20.

THE memory of deeds and attainments of past generations, otherwise lost in oblivion, have been preserved and perpetuated by monuments of stone or bronze. From earliest times men have sought to leave some enduring expression of the emotions that thrilled, the events that swayed, and the notable characters that influenced their day and generation.

It is surely more than a coincidence that the oldest memorials are all of religious signification, although the deities they immortalized were pagan and the worship they commemorated was heathen.

In many instances the only existing records of vanished people are their excavated temples, altars, or idols. Such was the great Temple of the Sun unearthed by the Spanish conquerors at Cuzco—at once the national cathedral and

royal mausoleum of the Incas, that remarkable race whose past history delineates the fadeless romance of South America.

Such also are the supposed druidical ruins at Stonehenge, mighty and majestic pillars of granite, brought centuries before Christ from some far-distant region and elevated to their extraordinary positions at a time when the technique of hydraulics and other lifting agencies were absolutely unknown.

Then there are the great architectural wonders of the Pharaohs—the Sphinx of inscrutable face, looking forward through the centuries, with back turned to the swirling sands of the Sahara; the Pyramids, memorials of the Egyptian monarchs, who planned and raised them to perpetuate their glory and, in the shadow of these, other monuments of sorrowful testimony to the degradation of the Israelitish bondsmen that built them in blood and tears.

Impressive and significant, too, are the many upright monoliths of pink granite, cut in the quarries of Syene, whose origin is sought in sacred stones set upright in honour of the gods

or the dead. Such memorial shafts have been coveted by many nations. Twelve of them are in Rome, the largest taken to Rome by Constantine the Great and now erected in the piazza of St. John Lateran. One is standing on the Place de la Concorde at Paris, presented to France by Mehemet Ali. Two that were originally at Heliopolis were taken by Augustine to adorn the Cæsarium at Alexandria. There they remained until half a century ago when one was taken and erected on the Thames embankment and the other in Central Park, New York. The earliest of these, still standing on its original base at Heliopolis, is that of Senwosri I of the XII dynasty and it stood there for more than three thousand years before Christ was born. This ancient monument, with its pyramidon sheathed in burnished brass or gold to catch and reflect the rays of the sun, would so proclaim the honour of the god after whom the city was named—Heliopolis, the city of the Sun, or its Bible name, the city of On.

Upon that great obelisk Abraham must have

looked when, in distrust of God, he "went down into Egypt." Doubtless on many a moonlight night there walked in its shadow Joseph and Asenath, daughter of a priest in that city of On, whom Joseph had wooed and won.

Long years after, Moses, the son of Pharaoh's daughter, and heir of the throne to upper and lower Egypt, rode past it in royal state. Past that same mighty monolith the Israelites in bondage filed to their daily toil driven by hard taskmasters. There Joseph and Mary with "the young child" rested after escaping from the blood-thirsty tyrant that murdered the innocents of Bethlehem. Past it the royal retinue of the Queen of Sheba swept as she journeyed to the Court of King Solomon.

What histories these monuments, if they could but speak, would unroll! What memories they enshrine! Think of the Taj Mahal, at Delhi, India, in beauty of structure the most splendid tomb man's hand has ever erected, built by the Shah Jehan in memory of his beautiful and virtuous wife!

Think of the bell-shaped temple in Ceylon,

the most sacred shrine of millions of Buddhists, because there the heart of Buddha is wasting away in its jewelled urn!

Pass along the Appian Way from the gate of Rome to the avenue of the princely dead! Here Rome buried her nobles, her generals, her Cæsars, and over them reared marble memorials.

Beyond the Rio Grande are the ruins of ancient Puye. Populous for centuries, abandoned for more than a thousand years, over the crumbling dust and ashes of uncounted generations the great cliff in solitary grandeur alone perpetuates our memory of them.

The titan stones of Cuzco, in the heart of the mountains of Peru, that great city of the Sun-worshippers, are wearing to dust. Magnificent dreamers, and just as magnificent doers, were these Sun-worshippers, who, with the passing of the ages, have passed into oblivion. We do not know to whom in blood and culture they were related. But on the summit of the Andes, behind Cuzco, they sleep in death with those mighty monumental stones above them.

On the summit of these same mountains there stands a monument which, in its significance, dwarfs even the mightiest and most ancient, as the peak of the lofty range dwarfs the foothills of the plain. This statue is that of a King and is named——

THE CHRIST OF THE ANDES

—a Cross, indicating that the realm of His conquest has all been won by Love.

The statue stands three thousand feet higher than Las Cuevas, and is situated on the dividing line between Argentina and Chile. In thinking of the war-disturbing questions to-day, and the perplexing problems of to-morrow, I am persuaded that the answer to these and to every question can be given by that one supreme Figure—

THE CHRIST OF THE ANDES!

The story of its conception cannot be too often retold in these days of national and international heart searching. The season it cele-

brates is Easter; the message it proclaims for all time is the burden of Bethlehem's song,

PEACE ON EARTH, GOOD WILL TO MEN!

Between the adjoining republics of Argentina and Chile the boundary question had been in long and bitter dispute. Friction stiffened into enmity, and enmity was fast hastening the two nations into bloodshed. Then, in 1900, a saintly bishop of Argentina, one sun-bathed Easter morning, preached its story of brotherly love between men and between nations. Far and wide he preached, with the zeal of a prophet, until his countrymen were roused to action. Across the border a Chilean bishop took up the same evangel, and, in his turn, toured the land, beseeching peace and recognition. Miraculous was the change wrought in public sentiment. The two governments were forced into action by their peoples, plans for mobilization and fierce conflict to be pressed to the death were replaced by thoughts and schemes for a lasting peace, and the glorious conclusion was an unconditional treaty of arbitration.

The massive bronze statue of Christ was the gift of a pious Buenos Aires lady, Señora Cesar de Costa, and was erected to commemorate the signing of the peace treaty between the two countries.

"Since that time the two republics have signed arbitration treaties wth other powers; their armies are reduced to the numbers needed for police; their warships sold or converted into merchantmen; the Grand Arsenal of Chile has been made a great technical school, and the money saved is devoted to public works, railways, and housing schemes. The attitude of the two nations to one another is changed from exasperation to trust and good will."

PRAYER FOR PEACE OF THE WORLD

The prayer of the saintly preacher in 1900 that the day should come when Christ would be seen standing over the two reconciled peoples has been answered. The very instruments of death, the guns of the frontier forces, were melted and cast into that great bronze figure of Christ. The Government undertook to carry

it up thirteen thousand feet to the mountain top. It was taken by train as far as rails were laid, then drawn on gun carriages by mules to the summit, and, where mules failed at the ascent, soldiers and sailors dragged it up with ropes. On March 13, 1904, it was dedicated to the world in the presence of vast crowds of civilians and soldiers from both sides of the frontier. The Argentine soldiers encamped by invitation on the Chilean side, and the Chileans on the Argentine side, thereby each nation showing that the interests of those whom they had looked upon as their bitterest enemies, they would now take as their own—all differences would be swept away. Martial music and the thunder of guns proclaimed the inauguration of the

LAW OF PEACE.

The statue was unveiled in profound silence, and as the sun went down the old day died, and the two peoples knelt in prayer together for the peace of the world.

An inscription on the pedestal reads:

SOONER SHALL THESE MOUNTAINS CRUMBLE TO DUST THAN ARGENTINES AND CHILEANS BREAK THE PEACE WHICH, AT THE FEET OF CHRIST THE REDEEMER, THEY HAVE SWORN TO MAINTAIN.

The Bishop of Ancud, Monseñor Jara, was truly prophetic when he uttered the noble words at the unveiling of the statue: "Not only to Argentina and Chile do we dedicate this monument, but to the world, that from this it may learn its lesson of universal peace."

So at the feet of the Christ may the world look out upon a land of promise. It is only by breathing His Spirit, by living according to His laws, and by manifesting the love that uplifted Him in the sacrifice that made Him conqueror that we can, either as individuals or nations, enter in.

But how is it with the world to-day? Despite ten thousand heart wounds that can never be healed, despite the empty chairs, despite the wrecked fortunes, despite the disrupted

economies, despite all the blighting bitterness of a war only a few years away, the world is still tossing in a maelstrom of conflicting, threatening, antagonizing controversy. Machinery still whirls in vast arsenals manufacturing implements of war; scientists still concentrate genius upon inventions of destruction and death, millions upon millions of money still pour into the coffers of armament, popular sentiment still leans to the necessity of exaggerated preparedness, nations still foster grudges and harbour antagonisms against one another.

But a halt is again called in the indisputable reminder that man is made in the image of his Creator, and again we hear the chanting of the sky anthem, *Peace on Earth,* in the instantaneous answer proffered by a startling generosity coming from all the peoples of the earth to the cry for help out of the terrible disaster stretching over the flower gardens of Japan.

Upon thousands of its people out of a blue sky falls the bolt of death. In five minutes

Yokohama becomes a seething sea of scarlet fire. Mountains picked up by Nature's giant claws and wrenched from their footing of centuries and hurled into the valley; the peaceful park lakes become widespread morgues; three hundred and sixty thousand houses are reduced to ashes at a stroke; the earth opens and emits boiling geysers; and oh, pitiable men, women, and children are entrapped in the vortex of fire and blood! Pestilence, starvation, and indescribable suffering billow up in the wake of one of the greatest catastrophes in the world's history.

From the midnight sky, on this despair, there shines the undimmed star of world sympathy. Myriads of hands of help and hope and succour from every country in the world go out toward the

LAND OF THE RISING SUN.

From every port, boats are laden to the gunwales with relief supplies. The cables tremble with messages from the different Governments,

commanding their ships in harbour to load up with foodstuffs, irrespective of cost, and hasten to Japanese waters.

America's response to the President's call for aid is instantaneous and magnanimous. Lumber-exporting mills of the Pacific Coast donate forty-five million feet of lumber to the Japanese Government. Every available vessel on the Pacific Coast is loaded with supplies and headed toward Japan. Huge vessels push out from the ports of Hong Kong and Shanghai, groaning under their cargoes of bounty. The British China squadron is ordered to purchase supplies and food and hasten to the stricken land to render whatever help is possible.

A wireless message catches a great Australian liner and tells her to change her course and carry her cargo to Japan.

Railroads and steamship lines transport without charge all relief packages intended for the earthquake sufferers.

The French Cabinet orders all flags on public buildings half-masted as an expression of mourning.

Such moving, acting, thrilling sympathy for another's calamity the world has never witnessed. Racial prejudices forgotten, national differences obliterated, personal enmity, individual dislike, natural antipathy, swept away before the surging woes and agonies of a stricken, bruised, and devastated people.

Now, what does it mean? It means that, far astray as humanity may wander in thought and practice from God's ideal, it is not possible to obliterate altogether the likeness of the creature to the Creator. It means that underneath all else there remains in the human breast that divine spark that declares man made in His image—that nameless something that instinctively responds, even in the lowest, to the call of need, and recognizes the undeniable truth that to heal is greater than to wound; to build, nobler than to destroy; to give, more blessed than to take; to love, higher—far higher—than to hate.

Is not the terrible visitation one of revelation? Has it not shown to us the heart of man? Where so often men think they are enemies,

they are really brothers; all that is wanted to fan the spark of good will to a flame is

THE BREATH OF GOD.

Through all this loving-kindness that went forth from the nations of the world to rebuild the wastes of the earthquake zone and quicken new hope in the hearts of its victims, can we not read the handwriting on the charred walls of the disaster that when "all men's good shall be each man's rule, then universal peace, like a shaft of light, will flash across the world"?

Can we not see, rising above the ashes of consumed homes and destroyed cities, the beautiful

CHRIST UPLIFTING HIS CROSS

the panacea for every ill, the solution of every problem, the bridge over all differences, the place where the most widely divergent paths may meet; this Cross with its understanding sympathy; this Cross with its loving sharing of another's sorrow; this Cross with its voluntary losing for another's gain. O that our nations,

our homes, our hearts, may be under the shadow of this Cross! It means that mercy will take the place in our hearts of hard, harsh judgments; it means that stony, implacable spirits will become kindly and gentle; it means that things more precious, more profitable, more glorious than can ever be written will come to us—things immortal—

THE CHRIST OF THE ANDES.

THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD

I am the light of the world.—John 9: 5.

EVERY simile employed by the Master to describe His ineffable mission to striking and significant, but among them all there is none more all-embracing than that of the Divine declaration: "I am the light of the world!" Ransack the libraries of civilization, search the etymologies of every tongue, and there can be found no other illustrative word which more completely conveys all that the Babe of Bethlehem and the Christ of Calvary means to the world than "light."

Science and Scripture unite in giving to light a supreme place in the creation of the universe. Light was God's first gift. Before He stretched the canopy of the sky, before He tipped the waters from His hand, before He lifted up the great hills, before He gave leaf to tree, and green to sward, and life to myriad creatures

of wing, and fin, and foot; before He set the seal of His own image upon man, the masterpiece of His creation, there thundered forth the mandate that penetrated the thick, black, vaporous darkness wrapped around chaos and nothingness, and heralded every wonder yet to come: "Let there be light!"

Light was the world's first step into being. It is the great primary source of all its growth and sustenance. It holds in its glowing bosom every grace and gift. It is power, and speed, and heat, and healing, and form, and colour, and beauty, and life; and it is because of this we get some idea of the dazzling, all-efficient glories of the Saviour of mankind when we dwell upon the unalterable fact that, "The Light of the World is Jesus."

I want first to point out that light is power. For confirmation of this statement we have but to resort to the records of science regarding the sun, which makes our globe habitable and sustains its millions upon millions of living, breathing creatures; for one of our most learned scientists (Professor Langley) tells

us that the coal fields of Pennsylvania alone could supply the needs of the United States for a thousand years; yet he claims that the heat produced would not exceed the amount thrown out by the sun in a thousandth part of a second. The scientist goes on to say that the portion of the sun's heat which is poured on our earth alone would be sufficient to drive five hundred and forty-three thousand millions of engines, each of four hundred horse power. These are remarkable calculations—indeed, they are staggering—yet they give but a hint of the immeasurable heat concentrated in the sun.

But how absurdly inadequate is any computation of a natural wonder when placed beside the great Wonder-worker! If we exhausted every figure possible to mathematics, and marshalled into service every adjective in all languages, we could not sum up the power of the "Sun of Righteousness" nor tell the miracles He has wrought.

Thus we see from this simile that Christ is the only power that can effectively deal with a cold and wicked heart. What is the problem of

an arctic clime, or a cold house, or a frozen body beside the problem of a cold and hard heart? If your heart is a dead heart; if it is a wicked heart, if it is a despairing heart; then all the sunshine buried in the bowels of Pennsylvania, and all the fires of joy that worldly amusements and earthly gain and physical indulgences could possibly light up, could not bring one warm glow to your soul, or rekindle one ember amid the dead ashes of your despair.

Men whose lives evil habits have twisted and broken, men whose inclinations turn to wrongdoing as the sparks fly upward, men who from childhood have struggled with sinful appetites —you think those blessed with better dispositions and more helpful surroundings know nothing of your conflicts, nothing of your bitter discouragements and heart-rending defeats.

During my last visit to the far West a man said to me at the close of a meeting: "All that you say about childhood memories—a mother's prayers and Sabbath-school days—doesn't apply to me. I never had any such days. I was born 'mid curses and blasphemy and reared in

infamy and shame. I can never remember but once my mother being sober; my father died in jail. As a little lad of six I had to steal to keep alive, and was often made drunk for the sport of others before I was ten. Yet I have tried," he continued. "Yes, there have been times when I have fought hard to cut loose from the awful sins that drag me down like a great chain, ever pulling me into Hell. What can help me? Where is there any hope? Some say, 'Sign the pledge'—no help there. Some say, 'Get away into the country'—no help there. Some say, 'Form good resolutions'—no help there. Some say, 'Diet or doctor'—no help there."

Yes! When a man's heart is wicked he will do wickedly, no matter where he is, or who he is, or what he is. O poor sinner, listen to me while I tell you that Christ is your only hope! He alone can drive back your temptations. He alone can unhorse the sin that would ride you down. He alone can sharpen the battle-ax with which you shall fell armed abominations—He who changed poor, despised, drunken Bunyan into a saint and a Christian hero.

If yours is a sinning heart, Christ alone can cleanse it. If yours is a proud heart, He alone can humble it. If yours is a rebellious heart, He alone can subdue it.

I tell you that the almost inestimable force stored up in the centre of our solar system, the scientific calculation of which I have quoted, fades into nothingness when compared with the driving power of Jesus, the Light of the World. How far can He drive away a man's sins and his despair? "As far as the East is from the West." Can you tell me how far that is? No. Can any scientist or mathematician or geologist tell me how far that is? No. Well, that is just how far the power of the Sun of Righteousness will drive your sins away from you.

I want to point out the marvellous speed of light. When the history of our time is written, foremost among its achievements will stand the marvellous advances in travelling facilities. This is the age of "rapid transit," and men are scurrying across the continents, shooting through the bowels of the earth, and flying

overhead with a velocity that our grandparents would have looked upon as supernatural. But you cannot compare the speed of any mode of travel known to man with the bewildering pace of light.

The world we live in has a circumference of twenty-five thousand miles. How long do you think it would take light to make this tremendous journey? Would it take a day? Less than that. A minute? Less even than that. The fact is that light would flash round this great globe of ours no less than seven times in a second.

Sound is a fast traveller—much quicker than substance—but the speed of sound is not to be compared with the rapidity of light. When a gun is fired at a distance you see the flash before you hear the report. In an electric storm you see the lightning before you hear the thunder. This interval marks the greater time required by sound to reach the ear compared with the time required by light to reach the eye. Again a scientist gives us the best idea of this phenomenon. He tells us light travels from the sun to the earth in eight minutes, but if a man

standing on the sun could blow a blast on a trumpet loud enough to be heard down here upon the earth, the sound would not reach us for fourteen years! So when God said, "Let there be light!"—in a flash there was light.

So I learn from the simile that Christ comes to us quickly. What a lot of waiting we have to do in this world! So many earthly blessings lose their charm through years of postponement. Sometimes the treasure longed for is tarnished or grown old before it is ours; or our hearts are too sick with hope deferred to appreciate it when at last it stops at our gate. So it is with our troubles. How very often we have had to struggle through the worst of the blow alone! Husband or mother or friend could not get to us, or possibly even know of the loss until the loved one was buried. But, oh, blessed be high heaven, there is no waiting for Jesus! When the blow falls, while the storm is sweeping, as the grief clouds break, Jesus is there—near. Not coming, but close beside us, for before we ask, He answers; before we seek, He is found of us.

As I write upon this great and precious fact, I pray, "O Lord, help me to remember it more and more!" The Divine nature is so great and so high, and the human is so small and failing that we are apt to think that they cannot touch each other at any point. I might have ever so many troubles, but they would never get to the White House, and there are multitudes in Great Britain whose distresses King George never hears of, but there is a Throne against which strike our most insignificant perplexities. What touches us, touches Christ. O ye who are in sorrow—be it through a newly opened grave, or be it because you are wrongly oppressed and have nowhere to look for redress, or be it because of reverses in business which have made very existence a most awful struggle, or be it like a hunted bird you are torn with shot of temptation and wounded and sick and scarred—let me tell you, Christ is near you!

In asking Him for help you have not to wait for a reply to your communication before you are sure it is received, as you would to a letter mailed to a friend in London. Christ knows

too well how immediate are our needs to place Himself at a distance from us. He knows that life's sea is no common lake, but a great ocean, billowed up with trouble, and that we need Him as did the disciples in the boat. He knows it is no sleeping in a soldier's tent with our arms stacked—it is a bayonet charge, and we want Him near at hand to ward off the blow with the Arm of His Salvation.

Oh, yes, He knows too well what it is to climb the mountain not to help us up the steep; too well what it is to carry a cross not to help us carry ours; too well how it feels to be persecuted, abused, and wronged, not to come quickly to the help of those who are imposed upon; too well what it is to be sick, not to hover over the couch of those who suffer; yes, and knows too well what it is to die ever to leave us in that last great extremity!

Blessed Jesus! Thou knowest it all. Seeing Thy wounded side, and Thy wounded hands, and Thy wounded feet, and Thy wounded brow, we are sure Thou knowest it all.

Oh, when those on whose breasts we have

wept out our griefs are snatched away from us, then that Hand which wipeth away all tears from all faces is near to soothe our hearts' agony, and when other lights go out and the world grows dark to us, then Thou art near, making it light at eventide!

Jesus is the light of the world—the whole world. He stretched out His arms so wide on Calvary that they embraced the whole world. In this life the rich have the best of everything —best houses, best clothes, best bank accounts, best spread tables. At night time they pass in out of rooms ablaze with a thousand electric bulbs; they sit at tables with lights of every hue reflected in shining silver and sparkling decanter; they pass up and down ways made bright by huge chains of leaping, dazzling arcs. But the poor, huddled in garret and crowded in cellar, ply their needle and thread to the uncertain flicker of a tallow candle, or divide their hard-earned bread among the pallid, puny children under the smoky fumes of an oil lamp. They live in ill-lighted dwell-

ings, down narrow, shadowed streets, and hundreds go blind through poor nourishment and insufficient light. Oh, when I think of it, my heart swells with undying gratitude that Jesus remembered the poor! He came down to share their lot. He was born in a stable. He was reared in a poor man's home. He wiped from His brow the sweat of hard toil. His hands were calloused from the use of the plane and the hammer. He pillowed His tired head upon a stone. His delicate form was chilled by the cold east wind. He was hungry for want of common bread. How glad I am that when He came down the steeps of Glory into earth's woe-bestricken darkness, He came not only for the well-off and the well-behaved, and the well-learned and the well-dressed, but for the poor; and, looking with ineffable pity down every blind alley, up into every top attic, into every basement cellar, through every prison grating, down every free hospital ward, into nook and corner of every almshouse, upon every toiler's bench and table and tool, He

threw a golden sunburst from the great dazzling, inextinguishable lamp—the Light of the world.

Dr. John Mason preached one sermon one hundred and thirty-seven times, and his text was, "To the poor the Gospel is preached"; and as one who has lived in the heart of the worst and lowest neighbourhoods of the world's greatest cities, with that sainted man I testify with all the vehemence possible to me that Jesus is a light to the poor. He sweetens their bitter cup; He causes them to rejoice amid sorrows; He makes palatable their plain fare; He gives them in their old age a staff to lean upon that is better than any rich man's gold-mounted walking stick—the staff that David talked of when he said, "Thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me."

We think a president or a king can do anything. However that may be, I know King Jesus can. He set up a throne in a manger. He made a whole resurrection day for the widow of Nain; He dried Mary's and Martha's tears; He made Paul to sing in a dungeon; He for-

gave all Mary of Magdala's sins; and He sprang the gate of Heaven so wide that all the world's Christian poor, no matter how lame, and blind, and tired, can go in, and the beggars, and thieves, and scoundrels and all "they who sit in darkness," too, if they will but repent; for He is the Light of the World.

Greatest and best, the Sun of Righteousness never sets. Resplendent and marvellous as is the ball of fire burning in the firmament, staggering as is the estimate of its seemingly inexhaustible power, yielding its marvellous benefits to earth through thousands of years with the same bountifulness and incredible correctness of season, date, and hour as at the beginning, yet it will fail. Its blood-red glow will pale; its flame of inestimable heat will cool; its dazzling brilliance will dim; for in that hour when the angel, with one foot upon the land and the other upon the sea, cries, "Time shall be no more!" then, O God, "the heavens, though the works of Thine hands, they shall perish"; the bright light of the stars will go out, and the sun in death will close its

fiery eyelids, for all "shall wax old as doth a garment, and as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shalt be changed, but Thou art the same."

O that I could describe what this means! Shakespeare used 15,000 different words for dramatic purposes. Milton used 8,000 different words for poetic purposes. Rufus Choate used 11,000 words for legal purposes. But all the words in all the languages would fail to express the blessedness of the thought that this Sun never sets! There is no shadow creeping along the wall to cut off this Day. All things will change, all life's props will fall, all earthly lights will go out, but in death as in life, "Thou art the same."

As sometimes in an electric storm we see the sun burst from behind a black cloud and obliterate the shadows it casts, so the Sun of Righteousness shall scatter all fear of "evil" when we face life's last extremity. Can this world's light help us then? You will want your dear ones around you; you will want the light on your pillow from eyes which have long

reflected your love; you will want your kindred from afar to hear of your last prayer, I know —but is that all? Can earthly friends hold us up when the billows of death come up to the girdle? Could we children, who stood around my mother's deathbed, hold her up when she said, "The waters are rising"? Can Father's hand, or Mother's hand, or Son's hand, or Daughter's hand, pilot us through those last narrows? Can any human friendship shield us from the arrows of that unfailing archery? Can any earthly lamp or candle withstand the hurricane that sweeps down that valley? No, no! We shall want the Arm that David leaned upon when he said: "Thou art with me"; the sunshine that broke in upon that first missionary, when in Mamartine dungeon he cried: "I am now ready to be offered; the time of my departure is at hand." You will want the flashing, dazzling light which met the uplifted eyes of Gordon Hall, when, far from home, dying in the hallway of a heathen temple, he cried: "Glory, glory! It is the noonday sun of glory that bursts upon me." As you take your step

from earth, you will want the Jordan lit up with the downflashing of the glories of Heaven, as it was with my father when he said, "Thou art the Sun that never sets."

Oh, those of you who read this, who are far from God, I plead with you that this day you will come and prove that there is everything in Jesus! Come and test if God is not good, and Christ is not gracious, and the Holy Spirit is not omnipotent. Kneel now at His altar; stretch out your hand now toward His cross; lift your eyes now to the light of His Countenance. You that are in trouble, ask of Him and see if He will not help. You that are in sin, seek Him and see if He will not pardon. You that are lost in darkness, call to Him and prove if He will not break in upon you with everlasting Morning. The roses of midsummer have no bloom compared with the flowering of Christ's affections. The sun has no heat compared with the warmth of His heart. The waters have no refreshment compared with the streams that will slake the thirst of your poor soul. Whether you will accept Him or not, I do not know, but

I do right here, in the presence of God and the angels, affirm that I take Him to be my Lord, my Saviour, my peace, my life, my joy, my salvation, my light, my heaven, and before earth and sky, devils and angels, declare my unshakable faith in the limitless sufficiency of the Divine declaration, "I am the Light of the world."

CHRIST OF THE DOORSTEP

Behold I stand at the door and knock: if any man hear my voice and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.—Revelations 3 : 20.

OVERWHELMING in its suggestion! In condescension, matchless! In humility, without example! In compassion, a shoreless sea!

Sculptured upon a famous bridge, spanning an Austrian river, there are twelve different representations of Christ. There is Christ the Physician, Christ the Teacher, Christ the Carpenter, Christ the Shepherd, Christ Blessing Little Children, and other symbolic figures of His earthly ministry.

It has been said that the majority of those who pass over that bridge are the more profoundly impressed with the one that presents

CHRIST STANDING AT THE DOOR.

In one hand He holds a lamp, implying that in darkness He has come to the door; with the other hand, He knocks.

The figure thus delineated is so exquisitely drawn, so perfect in its every detail, that the lesson to be taught is apprehended as easily by the simple as by the wise.

Christ was aware of the appeal made to the human mind by parable and picture, and, in this manner of portrayal and teaching, He is without a rival and without a peer. These simple yet comprehensive word pictures, framed by divine inspiration, as much perhaps as anything else have carried the Gospel of God into the hearts and into the lives of men.

By the illustration of the "seed falling on stony ground," the farmer caught the idea of truth falling on irresponsive hearts; and by "fields white unto harvest," he could well wonder at there being no reapers for such abounding fertility.

Men who earned their livelihood on the seas with nets could quickly perceive the lesson taught by the illustration—a "large catch," or "out all night and caught nothing," or being made "fishers of men."

What housewife is there who could not ap-

preciate the satisfaction and joy over a "lost piece of silver" found? And what parent requires some scientific demonstration to explain why the fatted calf had to be killed because a wandering boy had come home?

Oh, this blessed Book! I need no further proof of the inspiration of the Bible than the fact that never a boy nor a girl, never a man nor a woman, but has profited by its study. Never a life or death but has shone the brighter for faith in its truths.

The text brings before us one of the most beautiful representations of Christ given in the Bible.

Authorities have said that Holman Hunt's production of

CHRIST KNOCKING AT THE DOOR

is one of the world's best-known paintings and will ever remain one of its masterpieces. So realistic is its conception that one might imagine the light shining from the lamp is reflected upon the dilapidated doorstep; and that, as the eye rests upon the uplifted hand,

there can be heard the veritable tapping on old wood. Anyway, Holman Hunt, with the inspiration of its truth in his own heart, painted the picture, and many choice and master spirits among the artists of the world have declared it to be the most beautiful drawing on canvas of all Christ's illustrations.

The tall, slender, delicate form; the patient, love-lit, tender countenance; the seamless robe; the sandalled feet, dust-covered from the journey, standing at the door with the weeds and tangled growth high around its threshold, showing that the door has long been closed.

What does it matter if the precise application of the text is to saint rather than to sinner? What does it matter whoever may occupy the house, if the door is *shut,* nothing but the dreary echo of the knock to welcome *Him!*

FIRST, THE PICTURE REMINDS US THAT WITH ALL DWELLINGS

whether resplendent with architectural adornment or crude and impoverished in appearance, *it is the door* that is of the first importance.

It is the door that shuts out the enemy.

It is the door that opens to the friend.

It is at the door the workman lays down his tools at the close of day.

It is at the door the traveller shakes from his garments the dust of the journey—the storm from his coat or the mud from his shoes.

It is the door that swings wide to the returning wanderer.

It is the door that is found on the latch by the prodigal boy.

It is at the door that childhood laughs and plays, and old age smokes its pipe of contentment in the evening glow.

It is through the doorway life's fondest memories crowd; through the door they came and through the door they went.

As I speak upon this subject, the door of my own home rises before me, my father and mother upon its threshold, their arms locked like adjoining fortresses, keeping all hurt and harm from those within.

Upon that threshold our mother would often meet us when we returned merry from the

game, or sorrowful with bleeding finger or bruised knee.

I see her now, standing at the entrance, an angel. I hear her voice as she called my name, as sweet as the chantings that broke over Bethlehem.

I have grown up since then and travelled a long, long journey. I have passed in and out of the most magnificent entrances of castles and palaces and cathedrals; through the marble pillars and Italian gates of the world's most ornamental dwellings—but no door like *that* door!

Angels encamped about it, and to-night all the lights and shadows, loves and losses, ecstasies and tears, the banquetings and reunions of filial, fraternal, and parental affection, the height and depth and length and breadth that come down to me through the years, I find bathed in the light of Heaven that fell upon that doorstep.

Memory is one of the greatest gifts of Heaven and the dearest treasures of memory are those of the old, old days.

SECONDLY, I LEARN FROM THE PICTURE THAT GOD IS NEAR AT HAND

He is quite close.

A minister's little boy, taken to visit an uncle, said to his father,

"Is Heaven up in the sky, Daddy?"

"Yes."

"Well, I'll never get there. You have to carry me just to see Uncle Harry."

How in our ignorance we blunder, and how through our blunders we suffer! If we could but learn our lessons without making so many mistakes!

To reach this great, all-helping, all-redeeming God, some think there must, of necessity, be a *toilsome journey;* there must be some great expenditure of money, some putting forth of effort or some acquisition of learning.

Some think that between them and Christ stretches the long, toilsome journey of *good deeds;* sewing for the poor, giving of their possessions to the needy, nursing the sick; that if they travel along these avenues they will

surely reach Him. All of these things may be and surely are helpful. To those who have given their mite, or their cup of cold water, I would say continue in well-doing. The only alteration I suggest is that you *give it oftener,* ever remembering that

TIME IS A BIRD OF SWIFT WINGS.

When we are dying, our minds will not be occupied with the manner in which we have dressed, or with the amount of money we have possessed, or the splendour of the house in which we live. Our solemn thought in that hour will be of how ungrudgingly we gave of our possessions and of ourselves materially and spiritually to benefit others.

No matter how poor a mathematician you are, you will know enough of arithmetic to be able to cast up the account of profit and loss for eternity.

But no service, no suffering, no sacrifice, no knowledge, will of themselves bring Jesus, with His salvation, into your heart.

Some think that to find Christ, years must

be spent in scientific research. But what has an accumulated wealth of such research done for us? In spite of its almost miraculous findings, its railways, its telegraph, its telephone, its radio, its motor boats, its airships, its motor cars, its repeating rifle, its submarines, its poison gas, its electric wonders, its boasted advance in statecraft and the art of government; in spite of all this and much more, the tide of socialism and lawlessness is ever rising and threatens to swamp us. Thrones, religions, governments, are tottering. There is an ever increasing insubordination of youth, an increase of juvenile crime, the creation of the most deadly instruments of war, hysteria, discontent, suicide. What has science done?

Some think that the method of His creation, all His thoughts and His ways, must be clear to their understanding before they can find Him. "How must their display of human wisdom," says Bettex, "appear to the sons of God, who 'shouted for joy' at the creation of the world; to the 'watchers and holy ones' whom Daniel saw; to the cherubim and seraphim,

who look into the past and the future, and to whom the higher analysis of a Newton, the deepest thoughts of a Plato, are but the babble of an infant."

But who is able to explore the complicated plan of the Infinite? Who shall challenge the divine arrangement for the world's redemption with the questionings of the finite? Who dares to test the great, unerring Creator, to discover if He can bear the inquisition of the insignificant creature? Who ventures to believe that the sun's great light will ever be embarrassed or obscured by the glimmer of our candle?

Some become so wrapped in self-righteousness, so stiffened in bigotry, so blinded by egotism, that they will credit no ideas other than their own as to what is and what isn't.

So elated are they over the thousand questions that man cannot answer—as to God's sovereignty, Christ's deity, the eternal decrees—that, like Saul of Tarsus, after sitting at the feet of Gamaliel—the greatest religious teacher of his day—they miss Jesus altogether; and, like Saul, have to be struck down from

their high horse of presumption with a thunderbolt of disaster in the home or in business or with the children before they come to know that Christ does not stand at the end of avenues of service, or that to find Him they must spend a lengthy period in scientific research, or that they shall discover Him in persistent performance of grand and noble deeds, or a long term in the Theological Seminary. But to the everlasting joy of the redeemed on earth, and the redeemed in Heaven, *Christ is near to us*—He is to be found

UPON OUR DOORSTEP,

asking to come in.

My friends, it is all so simple!

We cannot be saved by philosophical speculation: we must become as little children.

We are not redeemed by learning, but by repentance and trust in the blood of atonement.

We are told to take our sins, not to a library, but to the Cross.

We cannot go to Heaven by way of Athens, but by way of Bethlehem. Christ does not

stand at the door of our head, but at the door of our heart. Socrates, with all his wisdom, lost his case before the Court of Mars Hill: there Paul, with his gospel, won his.

O sinner! Christ is near you. Throw out your arms in repentance now, and the first thing you will touch will be *the Cross.*

THIRD, THE PICTURE REMINDS US THAT CHRIST IS NOT ONLY WITHIN OUR REACH, BUT THAT WITH HUMILITY INFINITE HE STANDS UPON OUR LEVEL.

You will notice that it is *our* doorstep.

Think of it!

The King of kings.

His Throne overtowering all thrones.

His dominion embracing all heavens, all earths, all suns—He,

IN A PEASANT'S GARMENT—STANDING ON OUR DOORSTEP!

We have sometimes, through the generous kindness of great men, been called into their presence, but their superiority of station, their

surroundings, their attendants, their kingly robes, their epaulettes or other trappings have been so emblazoned that an impassable gulf seemed to yawn between us. We have felt awkward and embarrassed and, although we could have reached them by the length of our arms, they might, according to our feelings, have been the other side of the world. *But not so with this*

CHRIST OF THE DOORSTEP.

He steps down to our platform.

He has taken our form upon Him.

He is arrayed in our garments.

His hands are gnarled and knotted by our tools of labour. We can trace his footprints upon our stony paths. His heart saddened by our sorrows, His body wearied by our toils,

HE STANDS UPON OUR LEVEL! OUR DOORSTEP!

When Christ came from a throne in Heaven, He did not come to a throne on earth, but to the bench of a carpenter, the level of a

workingman; to the level of all labouring classes when He sat eating His bread on the ropes and rigging at the back of Peter's boat; to the level of all mothers, anxious about their children, how they will grow up—when He called the little ones who played in the streets and the country lanes, or from the cottages on the hillsides that He might bless them; to the level of the multitude who find it hard to make ends meet; who often go hungry without telling anybody, as at the great free feast He divided the bread which under His blessing multiplied into greater and greater loaves.

As at the well He asked the woman to give Him to drink and put His divine lips to her crude goblet: so He waits at the door to put His lips to the cup of your distresses, your griefs, and your tears. And in exchange He will give you to drink of the water of life.

O ye of the poor man's lot! Hear me, ye of hardship, and care, and suffering, and sorrow, and sin; ye who live in a sun-shining city but whose hearts are in deepening darkness!

If there is a labourer here, ye who carry the hod of bricks up the ladder on the wall:

If there is a sailor here, ye who hath felt at the masthead the swirl of the tempest:

If there is a millhand here, ye who stand day after day among the flying spindles and by the straining straps of the great factory:

If there is a mother here, ye whose little children go to school hungry, and you almost broken in the struggle to earn their bread:

If there is a victim of the sweatshop here, ye who sit in the rear tenement basement, overworked, overtaxed, overtroubled:

If there is a rich man here, ye who are inclined to think there are heavier burdens on the shoulders of wealth than on the shoulders of poverty:

If there is a sinner here, ye who hath sinned —and, sinning, have transgressed against the laws of your God, outraged your conscience, and broken heart and home and faith and prospects:

I point you all not to One who is high above you; not the One who cannot be touched with

your infirmities and your troubles; not to One who has never wept, never been hungry, never been without a home. Hear it, ye people! Not to One who has never suffered through other people's sins; not to One so far away that you cannot reach him. *I point you to*

THE CHRIST OF THE DOORSTEP.

No matter how long closed, He stands upon your dilapidated threshold, knocking, knocking at the shabby door of your poor, desolated heart. *Let Him in! Let Him in!*

But by far the sweetest thought in this text is that if we will but open the door, *Christ will not only come in, but will sup with us!*

I see in this intimate touch the

GREAT PRINCIPLE OF EQUALITY AND FRATERNITY.

Surely this doorstep, sitting-down-at-the-cottage-table Christianity is the basic principle of world democracy.

While authority will ever and must neces-

sarily ever have its place, God has willed that there shall be leaders and masters and teachers and overseers in every sphere, from the anthill on earth to His throne in glory; yet this Christ in Peter's boat, at Jacob's well, waiting on the multitude at the great free feast, asking to sup at the poor man's table, turned the Sceptre and the Shovel into brothers.

Tapestry and lace must not despise rag-rugs and calicoes.

Stars and epaulette have no right to be unmindful of smock, frock, and blacksmith's apron.

Fricasseed fowl should not speak disparagingly of plain bread.

This Christ of the temple and well-side has blotted out distinction in places of worship. To the woman of Samaria He said, "Neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem"; and, in so saying, he placed cathedral and chapel on one plane. What does it signify that Justinian, in finishing St. Sophia, said, "I have surpassed thee, O Solomon!" What are Westminster, St.

Paul's, St. Peter's, Notre Dame, the Madeleine, the Cathedral of York, of Cologne, of Milan, and a thousand others to *Him,* who meets and blesses the poor in the lowly chapel and Sailors' Bethel? I tell you that this Christ of the grand Jerusalem, golden temple, and cottage tea-table has linked together high-domed cathedral and flat-roofed meetinghouse in bonds inseverable, forged in the fires of Calvary.

THE GOSPEL IS TO BRING TOGETHER AND UNITE THE HEARTS OF MEN

There are those who do not like this idea; they say there are racial differences; that there are circumstantial and professional differences that stretch a gulf between man and man that can never be bridged, differences that will make those of certain isles and certain lands and certain hues of skin less worthy of esteem than others.

But Paul knocked that theory to atoms when, standing in the presence of philosophers and

judges in the high court of Athens, he proclaimed the democratic doctrine:

GOD HATH MADE OF ONE BLOOD ALL NATIONS OF MEN

They started from one Eden, they fell in one transgression, they are redeemed by the one and only divine atonement, the Blood of Christ, and are to dwell forever and together in one eternal home.

Sin is just as hideous under broadcloth as under rags. Our law courts, our judges, and our juries reach their decisions and render their verdicts, governed by a code of rules that are derived from the one irremovable standard of righteousness, the Ten Commandments. Murder is murder, whether committed by jewelled fingers pouring poison out of crystal glass or by the gnarled, knotted knuckles of the woodman with a blunt ax. And to chief and underling, to Duchess and Abigail, to liege lord and liege man, to knight and squire, to laird and serf, to noble and seneschal, to grand Turk and scullion, God hath said—"Thou shalt not kill";

and it is only by the one divine atonement—the Blood of Jesus Christ—that any man can be redeemed and, wearing alike the garment of the saved, dwell forever in the one eternal home.

Some people keep Christ out because they are ashamed of the condition of their souls.

They intend one day to open to Him—when they have made ready.

No! Do not wait to make preparation. You cannot make yourself any better.

Sometimes when a child or a mother is sick, the wife of the one rich man of the village will visit the poor home.

As soon as word is received, oh, what a scurrying and scampering around to improve appearances!

The one cloth is spread to hide the scars and stains of the old, rickety table. A mat—little more than a rag—is laid over the filthiest part of the floor. A clean pinafore covers the dirty, threadbare dress of the little girl, and the squalid, foul condition of the room is somewhat hidden.

BUT THIS CHRIST OF THE DOORSTEP

would rather see us as we are.

He wants to come in now. Let Him in! Let Him find things as they are—the floor strewn with the ashes of fires of love and purity long since burned out. *He will cleanse the room himself.* He says so.

I WILL SPRINKLE CLEAN WATER UPON YOU, AND YE SHALL BE CLEAN;

that is God's way.

And does not the Apostle Paul say of the man in Christ: "Old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new"?

If you are coming to Christ, come just as you are. There is no other way. Do not come in borrowed garments, with borrowed words, with borrowed virtue; come with all your sins, come with your broken vows, come with your lost opportunities, come with your hard heart, come with your heavy burden, come with your crushing griefs.

Again I learn that we ourselves must

OPEN THE DOOR.

You alone can open your door. No virtue, no pardon, no grace, no peace, will come to you by compulsion.

You must seek, you must ask, you must open.

Holman Hunt's beautiful picture of Christ Knocking at the Door was at first refused exhibition by the art critics because the artist had not made any provision for the door to be opened from the outside. When asked the reason, he said: "The conception is figurative of Christ pleading for an entrance at the door of the heart, and the human heart cannot be opened from the outside."

Many a lad would have won his lassie if he could have opened the door of her heart.

But we ourselves can alone open our hearts.

Oh, how dreadful, how appalling, to have this all-helping, loving Christ so near and yet so far! Upon the threshold, but the door fast closed.

When one of my officers said to a suffering, dying man this past Summer, "Christ will help

you," the man replied: "Well, He never has. Christ has never done anything for me."

No; because, although with a sister a Salvationist, a good, loving wife, and Christ on his doorstep through seventy-seven years, he had kept the door of his heart bolted and barred against Him.

A few days ago a lady said to me: "I found no comfort in Jesus when my two babies died of pneumonia."

No; because, although Christ had been patiently knocking since she was a child, she had kept the door closed.

The state of Indiana is called the Hoosier State because the early settlers, fearing their enemies, were afraid to have doorknobs or any kind of a latch that could be opened from the outside; and, so, when there was a knock at the door, they would cry out—"Who's here?"

We cannot afford to open our heart's door to everyone that knocks; for sometimes sin knocks, temptation knocks, and so we cry—"Who's here?"

Sweeter than a mother's murmurings to her

firstborn, sweeter than the angels' carol over Bethlehem, sweeter than the cooing of the ring dove, sweeter than the chimes that echo through Paradise, is the answer—

IT IS I,

who died for thee; I, who loved thee with an everlasting love; it is I, who will redeem thee,

BE NOT AFRAID.

O ye who are sitting by a desolate hearth, ye who know not which way to turn for trouble, ye whose sins have not only broken your life, but are fast breaking your heart,

ARISE AND FLING WIDE THE DOOR!

The judgment is coming, eternity is coming; this very hour may be your last opportunity for repentance.

The heart of the eternal Christ of God yearns for you. Through long years He has been knocking. He waited for you all last year, and all the year before; He has waited for you all your life.

When the baby died, He knocked. When you lay in the hospital, He knocked. That day you kissed your mother's face for the last time, He knocked.

Through every sunny day and every stormy night, on every Spring morning, at every harvest gathering, with every Autumnal withering, and by every snowy covering; He has knocked, and knocked, and knocked.

He has knocked with blood on His brow, with tears in His eyes, with outstretched, mangled hands of love; knocking, knocking, knocking.

LET HIM IN!

He will bring comfort more consoling than can be found in a mother's arms. He will break through your darkest night with angelic song. All the sins that have haunted and bruised and tortured your conscience He will pardon. At His entrance, peace and joy will flood your soul.

Remember He made a palace of a stable be-

cause the door was open to Him. He passed the inn by because the door was closed.

Let Him In!

THE CHRIST OF THE DOORSTEP!

Let Him In!

Loved ones in glory call over the battlements—"Let Him In!"

The children gone on before call—"Father, let Him in!"

Mothers, leaning far out of Heaven's light, call—"My boy, let Him in!"

Wives, whose forms, cold in death, you felt you could never let go out of your arms, cry—"My beloved, let Him in!"

SU-BAA

She came late in life—a hope fulfilled which through fifteen years refused to die. Everything about the little thing was as a dream. She never seemed quite real. Her beauty was that of a June morning. It carried the gold and the blue and the baby pink of skies which at dawn

smiled down upon the giant hills surrounding the farm lands of settlers who were gloriously blest with the contentment and right-doing of old-time folk.

The formerly white but latterly drab farmhouse stood out of the hemlocks defiant of the forty years which had tramped through its doors and passageways as though to say, "I am none the worse or less capable because I have passed my teens and know something of hope deferred." And it was the gladdest day the old place ever knew when a shaft of light reaching its most gloomy corner told that in birdlike flutter under the mother's heart the dream had awakened.

The minister, at the Christening in the village church, looking upon the baby said there could not be any more suitable name given than *Golden Dream.* This is how it came that the villagers always spoke of her as the "Little Dream."

At three years of age her murmurings were a string of soft bells; her hair the sun at noon hour; her eyes deep pools, ever changing from

blue to violet with the more merry or more earnest thought of growing intelligence. And when at eventide she would toddle by the side of her father, her tiny fingers held in his strong, broad hand as he gathered the sheep into the fold and saw that the lambs were safe, she loved to imitate his strong voice calling, "Shu-baa—shu-baa!" with her laughing, silver tones —"Su-baa—su-baa!"

Then when all the duties of the closing day were finished, she would spread out her little hands in appeal to be carried home and, with heart pounding gratitude to God, the strong man would wrap her loveliness in his arms. So innocent of spirit, so sweet of disposition, so beautiful to look upon, she gave to all who knew her an idea of what God intended life and love should be.

Years rolled by. At fourteen—her birthday —and about the same hour she came into the world, she bounded over the new-mown hay to where her father directed the hired men to hurry; the sky looked somewhat threatening, fingers of purple cloud tore down the saffron

curtains behind the big firs, and soft blue mists turned to heavy gray.

As a spirit of light she came, calling, "Daddy—Daddy! A man selling threads and tapes and lots of things at the door says I should go to the city—the great city—and see the big bright lights. He says he would like to take me! And, Daddy, he says it's wonderful in the city. Daddy, he's such a nice man, and has such a nice face."

Something of a choke caught at the father's throat. An icy finger felt for his heart. It was the first time Dream had ever spoken of going to the city. He replied:

"Yes, darling, you shall go—of course you shall go. Your mother and I will take you."

"When, Daddy? Daddy, when?" the child eagerly asked. "Will you take me soon, Daddy?" She was gazing out toward the horizon. Her lips were parted. She was rather breathless. The colouring of her eyes and her hair, the cream of her skin and the blue of her gingham dress, made her appear a part of the

setting sun. A cloud black as ink blotted out the glowing day. . . .

"Soon, my child, soon," the father replied. And to the men, "Hurry—a great storm is coming."

"Ah, Dream," said the gray-haired farmer, as he sipped his steaming coffee the following morning, "many of our threatened storms blow over, thank God!—not that they do not sometimes, as with the earth, do us a deal of good."

An hour afterward, seated behind the one family heirloom—the old mare—Mother and Father in the only companionship that withstands the stress of life, union of souls, jogged their way into the market for a day's shopping.

"These things always take a darn lot more time than we plan for," explained the man, as he helped his wife from the rickety and springless wagon on their arrival home. I do hope that young Jersey hasn't calved yet."

"Dream—Dream!" called the mother. "Why, child—why are you not here to greet us? I've got the prettiest ribbon ever, for your hair . . . Dream—Dream!"

Her voice with mocking echo sounded through the large rooms.

The farm hand said, "No—she was not in the fields."

A half-witted lad who was employed as a charity called from the barn door, "That fellow who sells them things took her away in his wagon. 'She'll be back soon,' he says."

The earth leaped up to the heavens, and the heavens fell with an awful crash down to the earth.

When the mother again recognized the old fireplace and the stone chimney in the warm glow of which she had so often soothed the wee golden head to sleep, a kind neighbour was bathing her brow and saying: "Poor thing—poor thing! God help ye!—God help ye. . . . God help hold ye up!"—while the father, twenty years older, held both her hands to his heart, as though holding both would better help than holding one.

Every lantern and horse and man and woman and boy were in the search for the next two days. Then an anonymous letter addressed to

the father: "Your little girl is in ——, the bad part of the city."

Nothing was said of this to the mother. But in the chill October dawn, the old farmer, with eyes blind to the repulsive blazonry of adorned iniquity, seeing only the sky-likeness of the little face; with ears deaf to the curses and oaths of drunken brawlers from emptying saloons, hearing only the silver tones of the little voice calling, "Daddy—Daddy—take me soon to see the lights!" in a rain the fury of which made the most thoughtless call their dogs to shelter, started through the streets of virtue's forbidden neighbourhood.

From door to door he passed. Rain drenching his clothes through and through; the brim of his hat, flat upon his brow; the water oozing from his boots; tears washing his sunken cheeks; blood dropping in his broken heart.

As the day grew, boys scoffed and jeered, some throwing stones. When night again drew its cloak around the desolation and isolation of poverty and misery, a policeman, thinking the strange figure was of one insane, spoke to the

man. When he heard his story he, too, wept and said, "I will help you."

And so from house to house, upon the threshold of an open door, with a voice that in the passion of grief and the courage of hope grew stronger and stronger, he called, "Su-baa!—Su-baa!" until standing in the entrance of one house more ominously forsaken than the rest, he heard the silver bells that rang across the hay field. . . .

"Daddy! Daddy! That's my daddy—that's my daddy's voice calling me!" And with a bound, the little figure—still of light and loveliness—leaped from the top of the stairway and was wrapped in the cloak and the arms, against the great heart broken and healed.

So Christ stands upon the doorstep calling—calling—

Let Him In!

SPRINGTIDE

The flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in the land.—Song of Solomon 2 : 12.

FOR years I have wanted to preach a sermon on Springtide. But when Nature is wrapped in Winter's mantle, and one is held within knolls of ice and walls of snow; when ponds are sheets of adamant; when rivulets are icy fingers clutching at earth's frozen breast, and the great trees are swaying their resentment of north winds outstaying their welcome, one's mind refuses to visualize hills spread with carpets of green, woods awakening with cooings and murmurings, rosebuds breaking into pink on climbing brier, and all the variegated colours, the cheerful sounds, the whispering breezes interwoven with the prophetic spirit of the dear, sweet season.

Then when this light-footed daughter of

Heaven presents herself at your door you are too entranced with her beauty to attempt to portray her in uncomely hieroglyphics.

But my calendar tells me that the season is now already well on the way, and although heavy snow still covers the ground, as I look through my window I catch something of a cunningness in the sunshine that does not belong to Winter, and observe a fascinating, gauzelike sheen veiling the nakedness of tree branches, great

TEARS FALLING FROM SUSPENDED ICICLES

as though Jack Frost himself were crying over his departure being delayed. And, if you will believe me, on the crest of a bank of snow there is a little robin carrying an infinitesimal wisp of straw, while from the eaves his mate chirps soft murmurings, looking down upon him with mysterious and wistful glance.

Then, too, there is a mystic something in the pure blue of the sky, in the ethereal mildness of the air, and in the gentle odours of the morning that recalls to my mind that Springtide is

more a sensation than an appearance, more a hope than a visible reality; and this, coupled with a new awakening thrilling my whole being, tells me that the time is at hand to celebrate

THE MIRACLE SEASON OF THE YEAR.

When the Queen of Sheba made her renowned visit to Solomon she laid at his feet her gifts of spices and ivory and precious stones. So Springtide brings her tribute to lay at the feet of her Lord. Veiled in white she is already on her journey. To bands unequalled in the treetops she is marching up the hills and across the plains and through the valleys, her arms laden with matchless gifts of priceless treasures, and ere long, with a rush of blossom and song, she will have flooded the earth with flowers and filled the air with melody.

Spring's first message to us is that we, too, should be beautifying the earth. Spring is so fair, so beautiful to look upon. She comes through the gates of the morning in her bridal robes of light and verdure, her arms laden with

snowdrops and violets, and the forests harp on vine-strung branches while she passes up and down the gloomy, depressed, sick, and tearful places, and by the warmth of her sun-bathed presence calls into life and loveliness everything Winter has chilled and blighted.

Should we not diffuse such loveliness? Should not our lives kindle hope and enthusiasm in hearts chilled by the frosts of Winter? The only way for the sunshine and beauty of Jesus Christ to flood the Church is for us to

AWAKEN FROM OUR WINTER'S SLEEP,

cast aside our cold indifference toward the sins and the hurts and the troubles all around us, and do something and be something—something sunny, something beautiful, something blossoming, something invigorating.

In this Winter-world it is heavenly Springtide that is wanted. Can you not be a flower that cheers a sickroom, or a branch that shelters a child, or a river that carries someone's burdens, or a sunbeam that brightens a lonely path, or a dewdrop reflecting Heaven's light?

I remember when in my own childhood we were sometimes forced to take hasty shelter under the leafy boughs of a great oak I would look up and wish I were a tree to shelter people from the heavy rains as those spreading branches sheltered me. Since then I have learned what a wide-spreading shelter for others the Tree of Calvary can make us.

Are you sheltering anyone from life's storms or are your branches without foliage? Who would run for protection to a tree that had no leaves? And what storm-beaten spirit will turn for help to a heart that is cold and without feeling for another in distress? Oh, believe me, there is a field for you to bear fruit in, a garden for you to bloom in, someone beaten by heavy rains for your branches to screen! Awake from your Winter's sleep, your Winter habits, your chilling unkindness and barren forgetfulness of others. Throw on the Springtide mantle, white with the blossoms of the Lily of the Valley. The world's sweetest influence will ever be from those who breathe infinite loveliness into the hearts and lives of others. The most

beautiful flower the Spring sun ever kissed into perfection of colour and fragrance gives but a faint idea of the soul upon whom has broken the Sun of Righteousness. By their own beauty, like the violet tended only by the Divine hand, they make the wilderness in many a heart to blossom as a rose, and because of their soul beauty they are dearer to our eyes and to our hearts than any perfection of bough or vine or stem.

It is a cold and lifeless matter to buy flowers from a shop, but when in the window of a poor man's tiny cottage we leave a sprig of jessamine, grown under our own care and all asheen with the dewy gems of the sky, it is an immortal transaction, for we are purchasing in Heaven through earth.

May Springtide bring to us overflowing love to man! May it teach us charity to the Christian as well as charity to the sinner; charity in the Church as well as charity in the underworld!

It is ofttimes hardest to exercise charity toward our own kind. The picture that Spring

holds before us, each new life helping another new life, is as beautiful as it is divine.

Bunyan says: "The relations of Christians to each other are like the several flowers in a garden that have upon each the dew of Heaven, which, being shaken by the wind, they let fall the dew at each other's roots, whereby they are jointly nourished and become nourishers of one another."

By the breath of this new Spring I call upon the Christian primrose to help the Christian buttercup, and upon the blue-eyed forget-me-not to remember in prayer and blessing the hidden violet; that all may shed their influence of ineffable sweetness both in sunny and shadowed places.

Again I learn from Springtide that

THE TIDINGS OF GREAT JOY

are not confined to Christmas.

Dressed as a bride for her husband, universal happiness sits upon the throne of Nature. Joy everywhere! Up in the heavens, insufferably bright by day, merry with laughing stars by

night; down upon the earth, in the depths of the still pond and in the heart of the sandbank, winding through the woodland and climbing the mountain, upon the plain and in the valley, millions of creatures hum and chatter and sing and bleat and low in a hallelujah of gladness.

Springtide! Scurrying, laughing, dressing, bathing, building, planning. Joy of trees, hurrying on their garments of shimmering green; joy of fishes flashing their silver and gold and purple through the waters; joy of insects—artisan, architect, and artist insects—racing through a thousand activities in the sand. Joy of wings in the sky; joy of beasts in newly adorned forests; joy of cattle on a thousand hills; joy of cataract and waterfall and rivulet, laughing themselves dizzy as they clash their crystal heels on pebbled paths; joy of bud and blade and leaf; for the earth is full of the goodness of the Lord.

O Thou great, gracious God, all the sunshine Thou hast shed from Thy face; all the path of moss and bloom is the impress of Thy Feet! All the music is the thrill of Thy heart, all the

colour of blue and green and purple and saffron and rose is but the reflection of Thy beauty! On the coming Springtide may the last shadow of Winter's dreariness be gone, and may our hearts and homes and lives be filled with the joy of heavenly Springtide!

Again, I see in Springtide, God the Creator, "the glory of Him who hung His masonry pendent on naught when the world He created."

God reveals Himself equally in the infinitely small as in the infinitely great. His handiwork is as apparent in every lowly bank and moss-covered stone, in every insect whose existence is discerned only through the microscope, as it is in the fathomless depths of the mighty ocean or in the star-studded highways of the heavens.

Springtide is one great indisputable declaration that

GOD ALONE IS THE CREATOR.

All the artists and mechanics and philosophers of the earth cannot make one blade of grass or petal of primrose. On a Spring morn-

ing we shall find more of the elixir of the divine origin of all things in the cup of the lily than all the scientists the universe over could offer.

From a tree apparently dead I break off a branch, but in the sap, which Spring quickly causes to flow, divine chemistry has furnished every element necessary for renewed life and youth—the alum, the sugar, the potash, the carbonate of lime. Could any scientist explain the intricate mysteries shrouded in that process?

Who but an all-wise Creator can explain why two radishes, side by side in the ground, should come up one white and the other red? Who but He can explain the lungs of a plant, or the multitude of elongated openings upon its leaves, with swollen edges like dress buttonholes, through which it respires? Can any scientist explain the leaf of an ordinary cabbage, how in its every square inch there are three hundred thousand opening and closing doors by which marvellous organism it inhales carbonic gas that, while advantageous to it, is detrimental to man, and exhales the oxygen

that is life to man and injurious to the cabbage? All over the cabbage leaf I read,

GOD THE CREATOR.

And Springtide is but Heaven opening her golden doors for the Creator to walk again upon the earth and declare to all men that He is. I read Omnipotence in every blade of grass; the wooings of His love in every robin's call; divine purity in every lily; a triumphal arch in every tree branch. I see Eternal Majesty, God, Omnipotence, Creator, mighty and magnificent, riding in chariot of stars across every sky, and yet I see all Heaven in a dewdrop.

Do we not want to put our trust in this same great God? Will not He who cares for the young in the sparrow's nest look after our children also, if we trust Him? Will not this same great God who "hath made the earth by His power" guard our best interests if we commit them to His care? Oh, I do want to tell you that if you are a sinner He will be your

Saviour. If you have wandered He will bring you home. Whatever may be the form of your trouble He will be your consolation. Trust Him with a childlike, birdlike, Springtide-like dependence, and though

"HEART AND FLESH FAIL YOU HE WILL BE THE STRENGTH OF THY HEART AND THY PORTION FOREVER."

We must build right. Springtide also spreads before us the fascinating and seemingly miraculous art of nest building. There are few evidences in Nature that speak more emphatically of creative wisdom than the ingenious skill displayed by these winged architects of the sky. The structure of a bird's nest is of strict mathematical calculation and is not surpassed by any human handicraft.

What a marvel is the house of the little penduline titmouse, shaped exactly like a chemist's retort and suspended from the branch of a tree high out of reach of all would-be intruders! The reed warbler reminds one of the babe Moses, for it builds its cradle between the

tall reeds and rushes which rise out of the water, wrapping around the exterior the reeds amid which it is located. Hence the nest appears to be but a part of the river growth.

The tiny grebe constructs a perfectly water-tight nest which floats upon the lily-strewn pond.

The nest of the troopial is remarkable for its ingenious construction: shaped like a cup attached to a long sleeve, with a back and a front entrance, it is laced to the extreme point of a branch or arm of a large tree that swings out over the water, generally a deep-running river.

The Baltimore bird, on account of the large bag-shaped nests hung in the heart of the trees in which it rears its young, deserves to be mentioned in the first rank of bird builders.

The nest of the long-tailed titmouse is a globular abode not exceeding the size of the fist, but the elegance of its construction bewilders the observer.

The tailor bird, a charming exotic pecies takes two very long lanceolated leaves and by means of flexible grass sews the edges of

them together. When this is done the little female fills the sack which they form with cotton and lays her young upon this downy bed. The nest is a masterpiece of craftsmanship.

But above and beyond the heroic effort and creative genius displayed in the construction of the nest is the far greater miracle of the instinct shown in the bird's selection of the location for its dwelling, which are always chosen with regard to safety. Sometimes in the thickest seclusion of the great firs; sometimes in a cleft of a high rock; sometimes hidden under the eaves of a building; sometimes suspended from a high branch overhanging a river; sometimes in the hollow of an old tree; sometimes, like the wee humming bird, in the heart of a lily; sometimes, like the subterranean penguin, underground.

Dear little birds, with their tiny forms and tiny brains, yet so much wiser than we are wise, and doing so much better than we are doing, building with "safety first" at every sacrifice—safety for themselves, safety for their young, safety from storms, safety from intruders.

We are so apt to put other considerations before our own good and the good of those we love—other things first—and we build too high, or we build too low, or we build too much out in the open, or we build on stubble for a foundation that the storms of life blow from under us and let us down, and let our children down, into confusion and sorrow and loss.

He that fastens his ambitions only on the things of this world collects wealth and riches and treasure alone for self-gratification and self-gain; he that seeks for the praise and flattery of the world merely for his own aggrandizement, builds too high. The strong wind of destruction will catch him and scatter his false, empty possession, leaving him desolated without a hiding place.

He that builds down in the mire of impurity, drinking of filthy waters amid the entangled growths of uncleanness and untruth, deceptive intrigues and practices, builds too low. He may be safe for a while, but the foxes and the prowling beasts of destruction will find him,

and trouble will come, and there will be no place of refuge.

He that builds too much in the open, always seeking the applause of men, the amusements of the world, and the empty flatteries of the godless, trying to feed on the dead and dried things of the desert, falls a prey to the hawks and vultures of the air that will pick out his life; he will have no hiding place.

The only safe place to build is to

BUILD IN GOD,

where the little humming bird builds her nest, in the heart of the "Lily of the Valley"; or where the tailor bird builds, hidden in the cleft of the great Tree, fastened by the cords that bound Him on Calvary, so that the evil and sin and hurt of the world will pass us by, seeing only the Christ of the Cross; or, perhaps, best of all, where the timid little bonaparte builds, between the forks of great branches coming up out of the River of Life, in Arms Everlasting.

O dear little birds, pricelessly precious little birds, because your home building teaches us

that safe, safe are they who build their nest in God!

Lastly, I trace in this embroidered spread which Springtide's fair fingers throw over the world that there is a fairer Morning. Does not every tree top pointing Heavenward, every petal finger lifted to cloudless blue, every flowery chalice breathing its incense, every wing cleaving the sky, every glad tone, every soft murmur, speak of a still, consecrated spirit of hope, a sure, glad strong hope—the hope of Heaven? Are not all these couriers of Nature prophets heralding brighter days to come? All these countless varieties of buds and blossom pronouncements of eternal flowers which never shall fade, of leaves which never shall fall? These birdlings' songs anthems of the blessedness which is without end? Oh, go forth into the light of things, and

LET NATURE BE YOUR TEACHER!

After all, wonderfully and gloriously beautiful as this world is, we do often get our fingers pricked by the thorn behind the rose;

we do, in the forest mountain climb, get many a backward slip and dash our feet against a stone. As we bathe our faces in the fresh Spring sun, we do so knowing that cold, bleak Winter is just around the corner. But the fair, uplifted head of the lily, and the lark which strikes higher and higher in the sky, tell me clearly that there is a land where it is always sunshine, where our humble blossoms are transplanted from the gardens of earth to the gardens of Heaven, where the scarlet and white hawthorns ever bloom, reminding the redeemed of the shed Blood of Christ which made his soul white.

This is the land to which our loved ones have gone. My precious mother, who was always tender and frail from the blasts of Winter; my glorious father, who for the comforting and warming of all men's hearts fought such hard battles with the storms of life; your little darling child, so birdlike with his prattlings and creepings in under your wing, they have gone to the land where

THE SUN NEVER GOES DOWN.

Do not fret for and wish them back; for under the spread branches of the Tree of Life, breathing the sweet aroma of the Rose of Sharon, catching the rivulet dropping like pearls from the Everlasting Rock, listening to the song of the birds of Paradise, they sing and smile and wait for you and me in

THE SPRINGTIDE ETERNAL.

THE STABLE DOOR

No room for them in the inn.—Luke 2:7.

OUT of the deepening darkness of the firmament over a chill Eastern night, brilliant stars of diamond-like sparkling shot their lustre as the two weary travellers waited at the door of a village khan for an answer to their humble request for a night's shelter.

They had arrived at the town to which they journeyed; but, had it not been so, it is doubtful whether another step could have been taken by the footsore ass or its anxious leader, who glanced continually at the pale sweet face of his young wife, as she uncomplainingly endured the fatigue and suffering of the trying and uneven journey.

"No room in the inn" was the gruff and impatient reply: such was not the first refusal given that night. The little town of Bethlehem was already overcrowded by strangers who

had come to record their names on the tax list of Cæsar. Whether through compassion, awakened by the patient face of the tired woman, or whether through avidity to get the small fee which a stable shelter could exact I am not prepared to say which—Mary and Joseph were given quarters in the rude limestone grotto, amid the hay and straw spread for the cattle. I fancy I see her alight from the saddled ass, and with an expression of anxious concern enter

THE STABLE DOOR.

A stable! contemptible in meanness, degrading in association, devoid of comfort, forlorn in appearance! In rudeness of structure, in separation from human inhabitants, suggesting a significant birthplace for One who was to become an *outcast*—"despised and rejected of men."

How prophetic is its rude structure! What *symbols of momentous and eternal happiness are its misshapen fittings!*

The gnarled and knotted beams partion-

ing the stalls in their distorted shadows, emblems of the rugged forms upon which was to be stretched this night's Gift, in the agonizing throes of death, Jesus, the Son of God, the world's Redeemer!

The rustic shepherds, leaving their flocks upon the plains, the first worshippers, token and type of the *first* place to be given, in the God-nature of Christ and the compassion of Jesus, to the humble in mind, the poor, and the lowly! To these shepherds no sign in the Heavens; to them the "sign" is a little babe wrapped in swaddling clothes: not in a king's palace, though the King of Glory, but lying in a manger!

May there not be, in the flinty limestone composition of floors and walls, a prophecy of the flints from rock-hewn caverns, with which, in after years, they stoned Him? Was not the whole scene of His nativity but a preliminary sketch of His life that was to follow, a ministry of mercy in the darker and poorer homes of sin and sorrow?

As I look upon this rough-wrought struc-

ture, fain would I point the whole world, not to the star that guided the wise men from the East—not to the orchestra of the angelic throng that carolled "good will on earth"—not to the palaces of kings—not the Scribes and Pharisees—but to a transfigured manger in a stable. In *this once dark, unpromising scene of nativity* there are hidden treasures, all-absorbing lessons of momentous import, which for our eternal welfare we should seek to discover and interpret.

From this stable scene we learn how great events may emerge from small beginnings; how often things which, at their starting, appear the most insignificant, involve issues of the greatest possibility either for good or evil. The amazed shepherds needed all the help that visions and voicings of angelic choir singing His birth could render, to enable them to believe that the tiny infant of the maiden-mother, wrapped in coarse linen, pillowed in a rough-hewn manger, was any other than an ordinary child, of ordinary parentage, born in unfortunate circumstances, to begin and

conclude life in unrenowned obscurity. It would have been just as difficult to imagine that the babe, under sentence of death, taken from the bulrush cradle by the daughter of Pharaoh, was destined to lead a nation from bondage to independence and establish a law that for ages was to remain the standard of justice and truth. Just as impossible a task would it be for a people of another and later age to believe that in a small back room of a low German saloon was born Martin Luther, one of the mightiest of the world's reformers, whose voice of thunder was to rock a world's foundation of a universal delusion. So it is *just as impossible to know what may lie in the cradle of our homes!*

Mother, as you rock your babe to and fro, soothing it with gentle murmur, or hushing it by lullaby, do you realize that, in your arms of love, you may clasp infinite possibilities, everlasting consequences, eternities of blessing or woe? So watch *your* treasure as the holy mother watched *her* firstborn. It is not of so much account whether the swaddling bands be com-

posed of coarse linen or of fine cambric, the pillow of straw or of down; but it is of *eternal importance* to remember that early aspirations and inspirations infused into infant hearts give colour and light for lifelong and eternal reflections, even as the sun gives the violet its hue and the buttercup its gold ere its budding. Give one half the strenuous endeavour and holy care to the cradles, nurseries, and schoolrooms of the world which to-day are expended in ministerial effort for deliverance from sin and crime, and coming generations will see three parts of the evil of the universe obliterated. Don't wait until your child is of age before you introduce it to virtue. As soon as the natural eye can detect the shining of a star in the midnight sky, speak to it of what lies above and beyond. The stars will instruct the awakening intellect how virtue and truth shine all the brighter because of the dense darkness that covers the world's sorrow and sin.

There are *cradle opportunities,* though marked with poverty and limitations, that because of their seeming insignificance we re-

gard with indifference, lose sight of, or abuse: yet it is such beginnings that go to make up life; and, tiny as they seem, they are in reality great *infinities,* giving character to life, and shaping the soul for eternity. Surely nothing can be less than a magnitude, that contributes to a soul's eternal gain or loss!

If virtue, no matter how small at its outsetting or humble its birthplace, can grow so rapidly and *travel so fast*—then the value set upon its least and earliest expression must be infinite.

Your opportunity may not be more than that of a village street corner, or than that of pointing a soul to Heaven by a word at the kitchen back door, than that of telling the children of Jesus before you kiss them good-night, or that of a prayer for God's blessing on a comrade whose burden is heavy to bear: all small, and perhaps thought not worthy of mention; yet *not smaller* nor more insignificant than the look that brought Peter to repentance, transforming the conquered to the conqueror; *not more simple* than the confident wish of the

little servant lass that led to the healing of Naaman the leper; *not more insignificant,* in the eyes of the world, than the humble nurse-girl's blessing the little boy of eight who, when in after years a nation showered him with honour and blessing, acknowledged her before the nation as the instrument of his salvation. What a returning of the "bread upon the waters"—how more than worth the waiting of "many days"! 'Twas Lord Shaftesbury's nursegirl that won the distinction. Hers was but a cradle opportunity, but she used it so faithfully that God made her a "mother in Israel" and magnified her name among women.

From that stable scene we may also learn that from unfitting and unfavourable circumstances there may spring what will prove of eternal profit to ourselves, and blessing and uplifting to others. You need only to put Jesus into such untoward surroundings in order to change them into gardens of Eden.

Could there be more ungainsayable proof that *adversity is powerless to hinder the pur-*

poses which God has hidden in the varied happenings of our lives? What potency had poverty or hardships, shame or ignominy, to dim the glory of the Christ-heart; He whose first breaths were drawn in an abode so destitute of luxury, and who in after life had not where to lay his head? *All that could best have been done without was present—all that the occasion deserved was absent.* The clattering of tongues without; the bleating sheep within; the irregular and ill-sheltered walls, through which the chill damp of the Eastern night could so easily penetrate; the crackling, shifting, prickly straw, so unsuitable for any save the beasts of the field; the garish publicity of the unlocked door—*not a single inconvenience wanting* nor discomfort lacking to wound the most sensitive and delicate sense of maiden modesty and decent propriety!

That stable was but the precursor of the endless continuity of adverse circumstances that thronged His life. They began to press upon Him, even in infancy, when Joseph, warned by an angel of impending danger at

the hands of Herod, fled by divine direction with the young child and His mother into Egypt. The angels that announced His birth did not encircle with chariots and hosts the infant king. He took no exceptional place from the common lot of man. In discomfort and sorrow of homelessness, having not where to lay His head, He went onward, uncomplainingly, victoriously to the grief and agony of His last days upon earth. All the forces of evil had *no power to impede the progress of a World's Redeemer.*

The darkness that seemed to eclipse the first rays of light divine only intensified the brightness that became more effulgent and radiant until all the earth was filled with its glory, the glory of Love, of Light, and of Life.

Adverse circumstances can never be held responsible for an unsatisfactory state of the soul. God has ordained that times of adversity should ever end in eternal blessing. The grace of Jesus sustaining us in trial converts it into a school in which the precious lessons may be learned; lessons which all must master before

they can attain their heavenly degree; lessons which alone can prepare us to stand where angels praise and martyrs sing. How we love to think about them—of those gone on before! How patiently they endured the pain! How lovingly they treated those that hated them! How earnestly they prayed for those that murdered them! How they shone as the darkening shadows fell! Now none stand nearer the Master than this triumphant throng. Their reward glistens in crown, in robe, in song. *Maybe your mother is among them.* It was the fire of loss of children, of husband, or of all, which purified the gold; or it was the slow, cruel process of hard daily toil and momentary cross-bearing that trimmed the lamp; or the lifelong effort to do something for Jesus, despite a weak, crippled body, that fitted the saint. *It has always been so.* As there are some crops only ripened through what would seem to be destructive processes of frost and storm, so there are many graces which can *only be ripened to maturity by the stern discipline of hardship and affliction.*

The God of the saints gone on before is your God. He will furnish the strength to enable you to bear even joyously all the trials and tribulations. Do not be discouraged. Look up and press on. Then if circumstances seem to be against you; if trials come in like a flood; if the burden seems heavy, the sky dark over your head, do not seek for an easier path; do not say, as I have known so many to say, that you are not where God wants you to be. Remember the road trodden by Jesus on the sorrowful journey from the manger to Calvary! Think of what that means to a poor lost world! Constituting circumstances, suffering, hardship, privation, death, and even the grave into the golden staircase that leads to the highest development of character, to the most profound experience of soul, and at last to the bosom of God. *Trial cannot harm you;* it can only bless you. For every cross-bearer there awaits a crown in Glory.

Words fail to express to our mind the transfiguration wrought in the stable through the *presence of Jesus there.*

Beyond comparison is the manger holding the scanty allowance of food for the overtaxed and exhausted ox, and the one cradling its Heavenly Burden, o'ershone by the light of a mother's first love, and still further enhanced by a halo, the glimmer of *glory forsaken, yet pledge of the greater glory to come.* May we not look upon that gloomy and misshapen place of shelter as holding a treasure richer, more priceless than Heaven itself contained? Did not angelic hosts, crowding battlements of glory and thronging shining portals, find more of Heaven housed within that rude cattle shed than was to be found amid all the grandeur of Solomon's temple—that stupendous pile of pomp and magnificence—the pride of Jerusalem? Grander than the Temple I see the stable —its cramped space farther-reaching than the temple corridors—its manger more holy than the temple altar.

All the light come——

All the Glory brought——

All the difference, Jesus was there!

Jesus on straw—taking out all its dis-

comfort for saints who have no better bed.

Jesus wrapped in swaddling bands! Little does it matter of what poor stuff your coat is made: that counts for nothing; the important question is, how clothed in grace are you?

Jesus in the dark—lighting a lamp to banish every shadow thrown across the pilgrim's path from stable, store, carpenter's shop, fisherman's hut, widow's cottage, toiling loom, and earth's saddest places, to Heaven.

Jesus in a stable—making it happy and bright, filling it with blessing for tired shepherds and seeking worshippers; even as He comes into your house, clearing the gloom, driving out the cold, lighting up the dark, drying the tears, and saving from wrong. It is the *presence of Jesus that makes all the difference.*

Here is a home—I know its carpets are threadbare, and its table may be scantily spread, but it is not that which makes the trouble. The father has a bad temper; he professes to be a Christian, but is not converted; he keeps a good appearance and talks pleasantly to people with whom he transacts business at the office,

but at home he is impatient and full of complaint. He storms because his slippers are lost; the meat is either cooked too much or too little; too cold or too hot; he declares the place is a Bedlam because of the noise of the children; the mother always has a headache; she means her heart aches, because every day something goes wrong. All life is a weary drag. There is competition with the neighbours, getting the children to school, soothing the sickly baby; and so in the tedious routine of a purposeless life time slips away into eternity. One night the father gets converted—his face is brighter than ever before seen.

The children are told of the change, the Bible is dusted and brought out, the mother breaks down in prayer as she says: "Oh, Lord, forgive my sins, and save me, too!" The children cry, and the father with unusual hoarseness pronounces the benediction, husband and wife kiss each other, children throw their arms around their parents' necks, and, though there are many tears, there has come to them "Peace on earth, good will to men."

Tradesmen, office hands, neighbours, and schoolmates all know well what has made the difference and say, "Salvation has come to that home," throwing sunbeams from within as from the stable; lifting first prayers—as with the shepherds; offering incense and myrrh of holy living—as with the wise men.

HAS JESUS COME INTO YOUR HOME?

That which appeals most to my heart, as I look on the sacred scene of the Nativity, is *the open door*—open in the darkness of an Eastern night to a weary traveller—open to the hungry gaze of crowding and eager spectators—open, awaiting the coming of worshippers from the East and from the North, from the South and from the West; for, since that hour of heavenly carol and birth of Peace, *pilgrims from all parts of the universe* have made their way in spirit and in truth to the open "stable door."

No armed soldiers guarded the entrance; no double-barred postern protected His gentleness; no silken-fringed curtain covered His countenance. It was but a step from an outer

courtyard through a flung-open door, two paces over a rude stone floor, and one was close beside Him, could kneel before and look upon Him, could place the offering of gold or myrrh or frankincense at the infant's feet. I see the coming of the Redeemer of the world—*easy to find—easy to behold—easy to reach.*

Post the tidings through all the nations of the earth, an "open door" to Jesus.

I knew a gentleman who attempted to get an interview with a king of England. Many were the magnates who had to be approached, lengthy letters had to be written, persistent and elaborate explanation of the character of the business to be transacted, the long string of formalities ending in a gentleman's introduction to an earthly potentate!

But here is Jesus, the King of kings, the Lord of lords, the Son of God! The song that first proclaimed His royal presence, in the *"Unto you is born,"* carols to whomsoever wills a world-wide invitation to pass straight in—straight in. You need not wait to change your apparel; you need not be anxious about a court

dress or formality of approach; you need not assume the attitude of one better than yourself; you can pass in just as you are, straight in to Jesus—Jesus the Christ.

Do the troubled of earth's sorrowing paths know that the door is open? Oh, what a dreary time the past has been, carrying your bereavement all alone! God meant the taking of the breadwinner to do for you what it did to the widow of Nain, what it did for the Bethany sisters; that your sorrow might be turned into joy.

The promise made at the grave, when you said with God's help you would make straight for the port into which the treasured loved one had gone, was, in your pain, of His grace. But through love of the world, and pressure of sin, you drifted back and away from Him, steeping in bitterness every tear dropped since that grave was closed; just the bitterness from which Jesus and His Salvation would have delivered you.

Now the best of your days are gone. It is dark behind you, and darker before you. You

wish you were a Christian. You see how much better it would have been to love and serve God. You feel so helpless. You are hedged in by evil influences, worldly associations, and burdensome circumstances. Yet at this very hour, does not a guiding star, shining in the darkness of your sky, point you to an open door to Jesus?

I beseech you to *do at once what the shepherds did.* Go straight in, tell Him all the wrong of your past, all the sorrow of your heart, all the failings and defeats. He in His love will receive you. His Blood will cleanse you. His Grace will be all-sufficient for you.

No tears that He will not wipe away from your eyes; no burdens that He will not remove; no sorrows that He will not share; no weariness that He will not relieve.

Oh, blessed be God! And blessed be Heaven! How blessed is earth because of this open door to Jesus!

Open to the blasphemer whose lips are stained with vile utterances; open to the backslider, whose feet are torn with sad wanderings; open to the worldling, whose soul is

polluted with vanity; open to the young and open to the old; open to the rich and open to the poor. None need go hungry, none need go sad, none need perish. Good will toward men—peace on earth—joy in Heaven.

Let all the angels chant it! Let all the bells chime it! Let all the ransomed sing it! Let everything that hath breath proclaim it!—

THE STABLE DOOR:
THE PROPYLON OF HEAVEN!

PRECIOUS PROMISES

At evening time it shall be light.—Zech. 14:7.

AT EVENING time, the twilight hour of life, the shadows flee; and upon the features of the believer there falls the glow of radiant peace, the fulfilment of the precious promise—

AT EVENING TIME IT SHALL BE LIGHT.

That was my thought as I gazed upon the two time-worn faces an artist had drawn upon the canvas.

Both forms clearly reveal the stress and strain of many years, both are bowed with the weight of heavy burdens, and yet a mantle of majesty enwraps the aged pair.

Surprising vitality, despite the drain of more than threescore years, marks the man. Still, without artificial aid his eyes can find his favourite passages in the Book of books held firmly in his work-stiffened fingers. But his

downward glance veils his soul. A profile is rarely self-revealing and, had the artist pictured his face alone, we might never have seen what he has so vividly thrown upon the canvas for our inspiration.

The face of the woman is wonderful, quickening the emotion by the story written there of a world of hidden resources in the depths of a great soul. It is a grand old face. Her hair is whitened by the frosts of many winters. Every feature clearly reveals the cut of the sharp chisel of experience which gives it dignity and beauty. But it is the faded eyes that irresistibly hold one. Tears and smiles have left their legacies in rugged imprint; long since they have lost the sparkle of youth, yet even more magnetic they seem with their mirrors of immeasurable vistas of memory to which the years could only add. Shining through the dimness of vision there is the unmistakable light of the lamp of courage which has shone upon the mysteries of life and now shines the brighter because turned upon the darker mysteries of death. The hands are folded; worn and

wrinkled hands; tired and aged hands; hands of gentleness, hands of power, tragic with the history of a woman's life and heart. They are hands that have busied themselves in a thousand activities for home, for husband and for child; hands which have fed and clothed and nursed; that have been tender enough to soothe the fretful infant and steady enough to prepare the dead for their last sleep. In both face and hands, divinely beautiful and strong, are signs of a soul that has come to the end of its long and wearisome travel, its rocky steeps of everyday drudgery, its deep rivers of sorrow and bereavement, and its tangled thickets of perplexity.

What does it mean? Whence this strength? They stand on the threshold of the grave. Whence their peace? They are both tempest-lashed by many storms. Whence their attitude of comfort? Their home is poverty-stricken; all luxuries and even necessities have been denied them. From what fount flows their calm, unbroken confidence?

It is that grand old Book of the ages—the

Bible. That one great Book which has seen the cradle of all other books and will see their grave; the best inheritance a man can receive from his ancestry and the greatest legacy he can leave to his children.

There is no book issued by the press of Scribner, or Appleton, or Harper, or Lippincott, or Macmillan, or Doubleday, Doran, or any other of the great publishers, so ever new, so beautiful, so thrilling, or so well adapted to all ages, all times, all circumstances, as this book; suitable for all zones, the Arctic, the Tropic, the Temperate.

The Arabian can read it as he rides on his dromedary; the Hindu, reclining on the hot sands; the Laplander, wrapped in his reindeer skins; the herdsman of Holland, guarding the cattle in the field; and the Swiss girl "'mid Alpine crags."

The king's electric blaze in his chamber of splendour, as the peasant's old lamp in the mountain hut, flashes down on the same imperishable promises.

God has made it suitable for all; for rulers

or subjects, masters or servants, parents or children, sinners or saints. There is no virtue but it commends; there is no sorrow but it comforts; there is in the statute books of no country a law not founded on its Ten Commandments. There are no greater, grander people in all the earth than the heroes and heroines of whom it tells. It is the best of all counsels while we live; the support of the soul when we die. When we realize that the Bible is suited to all ages, all conditions, all lands, and all peoples, we exclaim with David:

THE STATUTES OF THE LORD ARE RIGHT.

In every age the statutes and the covenants of Jehovah have been His children's strength and song. In these promises, when life's sea has billowed up with trouble, they have found their peace. Upon these promises, when sorrows, as a cyclone, breaking and tearing, have swept over them, they have rested for comfort. When pounded by the flail or crushed by the wheel or trampled under the hoof of persecution—as were the apostles and martyrs—these promises

have given them a confidence that in their overwhelming victory has astounded the world.

BLESSING I WILL BLESS THEE

Trusting in that promise Abraham left his Chaldean home following God into a far country, there to become the progenitor of the greatest nation the world has ever known.

THE LORD SHALL FIGHT FOR YOU

Sustained by that doubt-dispelling, fear-strangling promise, Moses led a host of emancipated slaves, with the enemy hard upon their heels, through the Red Sea and onward to the land pledged to Abraham.

AS I WAS WITH MOSES SO I WILL BE WITH THEE

Encouraged by those words Joshua, without fear or faltering, led his troops across the Jordan to the siege of Jericho.

THY HOUSE AND THY KINGDOM SHALL BE ESTABLISHED FOREVER

On that unconditional and irrevocable promise was founded the Messianic hope of

the Jewish people. David never for a moment questioned the redemption of that pledge. In his dying hour he expressed his confidence. Generations afterward there was born of David's line the One whose kingdom is eternal.

Promises, whether given or received, are sacred. What so precious as the pledge of fidelity between friend and friend! What so divine as the vows passed at the marriage altar! What so binding as business contracts between upright men! What so heroic as the oath of allegiance to country or to crown! Yet how often through the weakness of human nature these solemn vows are violated.

The death cry of Julius Cæsar—"Et tu, Brute!"—has been echoed ten thousand times through the centuries by betrayed friendship. The shattered bond of wedlock is the mammoth shame of the Twentieth Century; the unfulfilled contract, the blot upon its commercial transactions. Even the vows of patriotism, sworn to by men to their own hurt, have through treachery been shattered.

The broken hearts, the broken lives, the broken homes, that are strewn along the sands of time are almost always the result of a promise violated.

In the path of God's promises there is no wreckage. They, and they alone, are infallible, for—

THE WORD OF THE LORD SHALL ENDURE FOREVER.

Horticulturists tell us that there comes a time every year when but a few months away the world may face starvation, but every year the miracle of replenishing takes place. The Ever Faithful One hath said:

WHILE THE EARTH REMAINETH SEEDTIME AND HARVEST, AND COLD AND HEAT, AND DAY AND NIGHT SHALL NOT CEASE.

Thousands of puny hands are seeking to wrest from the hand of God the control of the universe. Materialism has lost for thousands the belief in the Godhead, and all the evidences of divine care have been blasphemously

discredited and denied. Yet in unbroken continuity the promises are kept. Even the blasphemer and skeptic may profit, for

IF WE BELIEVE NOT, YET HE ABIDETH FAITHFUL, HE CANNOT DENY HIMSELF.

The features of the two tired yet triumphant spirits in the portrait attest the validity of God's promises and it is our privilege, nay, obligation, in experience to prove them.

Think of this promise to the poor:

HE SHALL STAND AT THE RIGHT HAND OF THE POOR TO SAVE HIM

Blessed be high heaven for a Christ so near! With the assurance of such a Friend at court no lowly and afflicted soul need be friendless. The warmth and closeness in the promise must comfort the most desolate heart in the most desolate of surroundings.

Christ is not a far-away sympathizer, but an Advocate always present, a willing Helper, close beside us, waiting to supply the need, ready to answer the call.

The poor have no money, no servants, no friends in high places, no lawyers to help them out of trouble or protect them from the harm others may do to them, but

HE SHALL STAND BY THEIR RIGHT HAND

and with His omnipotence defend them and in His arms everlasting comfort them.

Let the oppressor of the poor and the forgetful of the needy take heed how they ill-treat or neglect "one of these little ones"! Let them remember the Unseen Presence which stands sentinel upon their defencelessness.

Don't these two old people look like it?—the old people in the picture, I mean, and don't they remind you of the two old people who sat at the other end of the table in your childhood? The two old people by whose side you would like to be buried when your work is done?

I place the religion of your father's house against all the treasures the world can give you, and all the fascinations sin can offer you, and all the mean suspicion and criticism that has been heaped upon it by a supercilious intel-

lectualism, and ask, which is the more worth having?

One is a garden of fadeless bloom, with rivers of crystal, and a sun that never sets. The other is a desert of scorching sand without a pool.

Oh, come out of the cold fog of unbelief, chilling you to the bone, and stand upon this immovable rock, the Bible and its promises!

To those forsaking all to follow Him, Jesus said:

> THERE IS NO MAN THAT HATH LEFT HOUSE, OR PARENTS, OR BRETHREN, OR WIFE, OR CHILDREN, FOR THE KINGDOM OF GOD'S SAKE, WHO SHALL NOT RECEIVE MANIFOLD MORE IN THIS PRESENT TIME, AND IN THE WORLD TO COME LIFE EVERLASTING.

The only comment I make upon this promise of such vital and blessed import to thousands of Salvation Army Officers, whose obedience to the call of God has meant the leaving of their worldly all, is to quote the words of my glorified father who, when he was last with us in this land, said:

"I hungered for hell. I pushed into the midst of it, the East Side of London. For days I stood in the seething streets, drinking it in and loving it all; yes, I loved it, because I loved the souls that made up the muddy stream. I went home one night to my wife and said to her, 'My darling, I have given myself, I have given you, and I have given our children to the service of these souls.' She understood, and together we knelt and prayed. That was the first meeting of the Salvation Army. Last night twenty-two thousand homeless men and women were given shelter by the Army in half a hundred lands. That is only one item in the long list of what we are doing to-day. You see the abundance of what I gained for what I gave."

Of the soul winner it is said

THEY THAT TURN MANY TO RIGHTEOUSNESS SHALL SHINE AS THE STARS FOREVER.

What a promise for those who are working and living for the salvation of others! They that turn many to righteousness! Not they that

preach eloquent sermons, not they that write books of which the public demands twenty and thirty editions, not they that come out of Princeton or Harvard or Yale with such high honours that they can make mysteries plain; but they that turn men from evil and sin and wickedness and cruelty and drunkenness to righteousness and soberness and purity and kindness and nobility; they that turn a wife-beating, child-abusing father into a loving husband and a tender parent; they that turn the blistered feet of the lost girl into paths of virtue and white ways and that make the runaway boy to start for home. And we can turn them. In many cases it is hard and difficult, but it can be done. We can turn them by loving them, by loving them with a love that will make them know and feel and thrill in their cold dead state the pulsating, hope-awakening, life-imparting love of God that can never, never die. We can turn them by example, example of truth and purity.

A boy from a filthy home was taught at school to wash his face. It so much improved

his appearance that his mother washed her face. When the father returned from work and saw the change for the better, he washed his face. The neighbours tried the same experiment until the whole street copied the example and was purified. O that we might walk about washed so white by the cleansing stream of Christ's blood that whole cities would plunge in and be made clean!

We can turn them by prayer. George Müller prayed a company of poor boys together and then he prayed up an asylum in which they might be sheltered.

The breath of Elijah's prayer blew off the clouds from the sky, and it was dry weather; the breath of Elijah's prayer blew the clouds together, and it was wet weather.

Prayer made the lions kind and gentle with Daniel. Prayer reached up and held the sun still for Joshua.

There is nothing so swift of wing or strong of grasp or loud of call as prayer. A boy running from home may take the midnight train from the village depot and reach the seaboard

in time to gain the ship, but Mother's prayer will be on the deck to meet him, and in the bunk before he throws himself on to it, and at the masthead before he climbs up to it, and on the sea against the sky as the vessel ploughs on toward it.

Oh, while I write of these truths and realize their wonder afresh, my heart is deeply stirred, and I here and now promise Thee, O Lord, I will pray more!

Let all my people who are fighting for the salvation of others upon this great battlefield of America pray more; pray that our every action, great or small, in the hospital, in the street, in the slums, whether by pen or word or tear or smile or sympathy or entreaty or warning, may be preceded by that invincible forerunner, and enforced by the all-powerful backing of that which in Scripture is declared to be the victory that overcometh the world. Then, with a fire that Mars has never known, and a lustre that would make Jupiter look pale, we shall shine as the stars forever and ever.

Let us close with the promise with which we began, a promise that has made many a candle of life in its humble socket shine forth never brighter than at the last,

AT EVENING TIME IT SHALL BE LIGHT.

Age without God is a dreary season of lengthening shadows, of deepening gloom and increasing isolation. Many who were most dear are missing. Those who are left are different. There is neither appetite nor strength for the pleasure of other years. But to the soul that is in right relationship with its Heavenly Father the deprivations of old age lose their terror.

As the hold on earthly things loosens, the clasp of eternal things holds fast. As the footsteps on this shore fade out, the ear begins to listen for the familiar tread upon another and fairer strand. The heart that has found its highest happiness in communion with Heaven finds that pleasure every day brighter and greater as the Shining Gates are near.

Oh, the promises of God, the beautiful, precious promises of God! How could we live without them? How could we die without them?

We watch the sun of our life go down, dipping deeper and deeper "into the valley of the shadow." The day is far spent. It is four o'clock, five o'clock, six o'clock; the shadows fall longer, quicker, and faster; seven o'clock, eight o'clock; the warmth has gone out of the air, the day's activities are all hushed; it is evening time; we are tired; the night is near, the long, long night of death. Shall it come upon us moonless, starless, dank, terrifying, smothering and choking the life out of us with fear?

Oh, hear, ye children of God,

AT EVENING TIME IT SHALL BE LIGHT.

It was light for John Angel James, to the last preaching the Gospel of Christ to the masses of Birmingham. It was light for Toplady, the writer of that immortal song, "Rock of Ages, Cleft for Me." With dying breath he

shouted, "No, no; it is not dark; it is light, light, light!"

It was light for my beautiful father, whose dying utterances told us unmistakably, indisputably, that the valley was illumined by the down-flashing of the glory into which he was about to enter.

It was light for the little shoeblack dying on his bed of rags, who said he was glad that at last the morning of Heaven was shoving back the night of earth.

The swift promises overtook them all. Under their shining the billows of life's last sea took on crests of gold and sheen of amethyst and flame. At evening time it was light. Light from the Cross! Light from the Throne! Light from the Promises! Shining, uplifting, everlasting Light!

As I write, the old year is waning; as you read, the new year is dawning. For some of us the path looks rough and steep. I cannot forget that I must struggle on without my father. But I am not left comfortless, for across the silver path his great departing soul cast

upon the dark, I see the treasure of his last words, as from the pinnacle of his hour of translation he viewed his warfare of eighty-three years and cried with his dying breath:

THE PROMISES OF GOD, THEY ARE SURE, THEY ARE SURE, IF WE WILL ONLY BELIEVE!

THE GARDENER

Supposing him to be the gardener.—John 20: 15.

COLD, gray dawn—that waking hour which, when following sorrow and tragedy, enfolds within it power above that of all other hours to drain from the cup of misery any mystic anodyne by which the heart-pain has been dulled, forcing us unrelieved to face again the grim, relentless fact, and so adding a new agony to pitiable grief.

In the poignant misery of such an hour, Mary of Magdala, her eyes dimmed with irrepressible tears, her soul heavy with grief over the death of Him whose death has left her desolate, her spirit sustained only by the indestructible memories that bind her heart to His, comes through the morning gloom to the place where she thought there could be no further pang of pain to feel nor weight of woe to bear. But sorrow, as joy, has the inherent power to add fuel to its flame, and Mary

found there was yet another heated crucible to test her waning faith. An undreamed-of calamity confronted her—the precious Form had vanished; the tomb, save the two angels in white, sitting, one at the head, the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain, was empty.

In peaceful contemplation they kept vigil there. To the woman they turned their eyes and, as though surprised, said to her, "Woman, why weepest thou?" Absorbed in her sorrow she seemed unconscious of their presence, indifferent to their glory. What are angels to her —the body of her Lord gone! But she who had seen "the thorn frown rudely" was now to see it "bear the rose upon its top." She had been seeking the living among the dead. He was not there: He was alive forevermore.

In the diadem of this resurrection morning there sparkles many a beauteous gem.

In the shadowed light of the breaking day her yet unknown Lord, apparelled as a gardener, appeared to the worn and heartbroken Mary. He came as from tending the flowers,

or watering the plants, or uprooting the weeds, or refastening the wandering vines. The dew of the morning dripping from the grass beaded His sandals; the odour of the fresh, upturned soil was upon His garments, enveloping Him with the unmistakable atmosphere of the most pleasant and earliest of all man's occupations; and Mary, with the rain of fresh tears upon her face, and with the sting of an added wound to her heart, sobs her cry of despair: *"Where hast thou laid Him?"*

Never, in the history of language, was there more brief response to any question—just the one word *"Mary!"* But all love and pardon, and consolation, and healing, song of earth and joy of Heaven, vibrated in its utterance. Under its thrill His disguise was pierced and Mary knew, with a certainty that banished every doubt and met every argument, that instead of speaking to a humble gardener, she was addressing One who owns all the blossom and bloom of earth and heaven, and who husbands and causes to burgeon into ineffable beauty all the gardens of the soil.

Looking back on that sacred scene through the long and illuminating vista of nearly two thousand years, there seems to have been given to Mary a strange yet glorious illusion. She *supposed Him to be the gardener!* What misconception is this? Let us try to discover its signification. What does it mean?

Does it not mean that Immanuel, the King of glory, the Ruler of earth and sky, the One at whose voice the tempests hush their wailing, the Life and Light of the world, the Anointed of God, the Judge of all, the Destroyer of death, the Conqueror of the grave, chose for this effulgent, dazzling resurrection morning —this morning overtopping in miraculous wonder all other mornings; this morning more resplendent than had ever before dawned above the horizon of time; this morning ushering in His triumphal return to earth, proclaiming His conquest of the monstrous tyrant that for four thousand years had brought down kings and queens and peoples of every nation —*the gardener's dress?*

Not in luminous garment of angels, not in

lambent flame as to Gideon, not in vestment or robe of state, not in "soft clothing" worn of kings, but in the garb of a gardener, bearing the unmistakable marks of a gardener's vocation! And thus, to all the ages past, and to all the ages to come, He declares Himself to be the Friend of, and identifies Himself with, the workingman.

He is not only the Christ for Sabbath morning—best clothes, pealing organ, open song book, thrilling sermon, trained choir—He is the Christ who comes in everyday dress, for everyday workshops and everyday toils; when we are controlling our business, tilling our fields, striking our anvils, pruning our trees, mending our children's clothes, cooking in the kitchen. A Christ for all toilers, whether they toil with the spade or with the sword; whether they toil with heavy hammer or with weary pen; whether they toil with bent back or taxed brain—whatever the duties and discipline that fill up the six days of the week. He is a working-day Christ, in working-day clothes, for working-day hardships! The wealthy and

the wise may share in His goodness, but, as I look at the Christ in the picture of my text, clad in the homespun of gardener, I cannot but think that the men with rough, gnarled hands, the women with needle-pricked fingertips, the mill girl with hair and clothing white from the flying flax, and hard-working childhood, feigning maturity, have a special claim upon this *Christ, the Gardener.*

O that we could tell to all the world the far-reaching, uprising, down-plunging issues embraced in this story, enfolded in these gardener's garments!

I want everybody to know about it. I want to tell it to the sailor at the masthead, holding to the ropes in the swirling of the midnight blast. I want to tell it to the poor miner shut away from daylight in the bowels of the earth. I want to tell it to the mother who earns bread for the whole family with what her needle and thread can do. I want to tell it to the newsboy who, after school all day, hawks papers till midnight to help with the rent. I want to tell it to the woodman clearing the rough, new

ground in the western wilderness. I want to tell it to the man whose back is bent to the oar on billowing seas. Tell it—tell it! O my God, help me and all those who have found Thee and have heard Thee utter our name, as did Mary, to tell the story—Christ the Gardener!

Had Jesus appeared in regalia with sceptre and diadem, Mary might have supposed Him to be a king. Had He appeared in garments bedecked with precious stones, she might have supposed Him to be some great mogul. Had He appeared in the regimental of a field marshal, she might have supposed Him to be a great conqueror. Had He appeared in canonicals, in cassock and gown, she might have supposed Him to be a priest. Had He come in any such guise, those who read the tale would feel that He had come in special relation to, and in sympathy with, the great, the affluent, and the powerful.

But no! He stands in Mary's path not as a Cæsar, not as a Plato, not as a Crœsus, but as a humble, hard-working gardener. From which I learn that Christ is in special sympathy with

every hand that toils, and every foot that tramps, and every back that bends, and every brow that sweats, and every heart that aches—a most practical Saviour, with understanding entering into closest bonds with the toilers of the world.

My mother used to say, "Away with arguments of your theoretical religion which would drive from the world all practical Christianity!" And so I say here—Away with them! Away with cold, stiff forms, which ask us to say our prayers as a child would repeat a Mother Goose rhyme! I must have more than theory and form! When your heart is sorrow-smitten and storm-tossed, you don't want to tell your troubles to the only one who can really help you, as through the Morse code, or in language another has selected for you. You want, in warm, simple terms, wrapped up in all the feeling of your soul, to touch their sympathies with your grief.

A friend of mine told me that his gardener, one day while attending to his duties, noticed a small bird circling round and round, utter-

ing shrill cries of distress. He quickly saw that it was pursued by a hawk, but before he could render any assistance, the little wounded creature, exhausted by exertion and terror, fell at his feet. The gardener lifted it and found that it was pecked and bleeding. He placed it in his breast, sheltering it with the warm folds of his coat, and nursed it back to health. The little thing, when offered its freedom, would not leave the gardener, but always preferred for its resting place his coat.

Oh, I tell you that our Lord Jesus is not an austere monarch who can only be approached by elaborate ceremony and strictest adherence to court etiquette. He is One who stands in our pathway that He may shield us from the trouble and enemies that pursue us, and hide us and shelter us beneath the folds of His mantle.

This is what you want, ye whose hearts break because of grief. This is what you want, ye who are pursued by enemies of the soul. This is what you want, ye who are disillusioned by the disappointments of life. Like the chased

bird, your soul in trouble has gone in this direction and in that, seeking comfort, but I tell you the world has no balm to soothe you, no refuge to which you can flee from the storm. The Heavenly Gardener's coat, dyed in the crimson-red of Golgotha's agony, is your only sure hiding place. Wrapped in its folds, your worn spirit will find rest from its fears; wrapped in its folds, your torn soul will find healing for its wounds!

Let us on Easter and every other morning pass along the Gardener's coat, that all in trouble may touch the hem of it and feel the thrill of His sympathy! Let every bell chime it, every sermon proclaim it, every carol sing it, every bud and blade and sapling breathe it —yesterday, to-day, and forever—CHRIST, *supposed to be the gardener!*

Why was it, we may ask, that grace should choose this woman to be the first to greet her risen Lord? Why should not the lovable Peter, the contemplative John, the guileless Nathaniel, the scrupulous Matthew—nay, the

Virgin Mother herself—have been the recipient of such heavenly honour and such earthly distinction? But no, it was Mary of Magdala, Mary of the watchtower! She who had been so great and desperate a sinner, the despised and outcast of society, for whose soul seven demons were contending, who was the first to have her name spoken by Christ, first to behold the rising beams of the Resurrection Morning. Hers was the honour, and for all time her name is inscribed on the page most vital of Bible pages to our hope and our faith.

May we not learn from this that there is no limit to the length and breadth and height and depth of His redemption; that there is such sufficiency in His forgiveness, such completeness in His cleansing, such exaltation in His uplifting, that those whose lives and hearts have been debased and defamed by sin, who have become loathsome and repulsive in their degradation, if they will but cry unto Him for mercy, shall be made so pure and blameless that on the Resurrection Morning they will be

transfigured into beauty before their Saviour's eyes?

With men, too often, while the repentant sinner is forgiven, his sin is remembered and held against him all through his life—sometimes by those who say most of their having freely forgiven. Not so with Christ! His Divine lips speak Mary's name first—not Mary the mother of Jesus, not Mary the mother of James, not Mary the sister of Lazarus, but Mary the outcast—knowing it would inevitably be enshrined forever in the story of that most wonderful of all mornings. And in the two short syllables are all mercy, all pardon, all understanding and all love! Divine grace had transfigured the repentant soul and made it worthy of that revelation. So does Christ reveal Himself in redeeming, resurrection power to those who, before they knew Him, were dead in their iniquity.

If one reading this should feel hopeless because ignorant of righteousness, because of a nature destitute of godliness, then let me assure such a one that Omnipotent Grace has raised

to newness of life many a soul deep in the mire. They throng the highways of Glory, they shine the brightest light of the Church on earth. If you this day will flee from your sin and seek Him as did they, He will in like manner reveal Himself to you.

I have often marvelled how quickly a knowledge of God has been acquired by the newly converted soul, far surpassing in Divine revelation many who from their youth have professed to be Christians. Their grasp and apprehension of the plan of redemption is nothing short of the miraculous. How often have I listened in wonder to those who, though ignorant, and having lived the best part of their lifetime in the darkness of sin, have held spellbound crowds of people while telling of the reality of saving grace, and of the sustenance and strength daily derived from the teachings of the Bible. How they have given proof of what, under the stress of great sorrow, God has been to them. "Ah," I have said, as I listened and learned, "Jesus Christ is ever more revealing Himself to Mary!"

Possibly the shadows of dawn may have been the cause of Mary's illusion, for she came to the sepulchre "while it was yet dark." I do not know, I cannot say, but I am quite sure, from my own experience, that it is the shadows that rest like a pall upon our bereavements that make us so likely to mistake Christ in them—to mistake His love for cruelty, His tender remembrance of us for utter forgetfulness. That unanswered question: "Why? Why?" What an unexplorable mystery it all is! We groan as we look through falling tears upon the vacant chair, and start at the fancied familiar footfall, and our hearts, sorrow-torn, beat out the question: "Why? Why?" Why should the loved ones have been taken? Why should they have been snatched away before their work was done? Why should those consecrated men and women have been cut down in their prime?

The children! Why? Why should they have been given at all, to fasten their little fingers in the tendrils of our heart—if only to tear and break them?

The parents! Why? Why should they have been called from life so precious to them, leaving a young family to the patronage of the orphan asylum? Why?

Mary stooped and looked into the grave. She saw nothing, not even the angels keeping vigil there. We look into the graves of our loved ones, and we cannot see anything. We think of our own grave to be opened for us, of that solitary and mysterious adventure upon which, in all its ghastly emptiness, we must all enter alone; and an unfathomable mystery stares us blankly in the face. Shadows! It is this "Why?" —this uncertainty—that so benumbs our perception and adds to our desolation. So must it have been with Mary. Oh, how indescribably and inscrutably so it must have been to her! Was ever grief shadowed by greater mystery? Had she not, from a distance, beheld the direful, awe-inspiring murder of her Lord? Had she not in vain waited to see Him, in the exercise of His omnipotence, come down from the Cross and destroy His foes? Had she not

seen Him die like a common felon? Oh, what room for doubt, for wonder and for question!

So it is with us in the multifarious, inexplicable happenings of life. Why should the selfish and mean gain; the unselfish and generous lose? Why should the wicked prosper and the righteous meet with misfortune? Why should those godless parents have a family of ten and not lay one in the cemetery, and those God-fearing, God-serving parents bury three out of five? Why? Can you answer? No! Can philosophy answer? No! Can science answer? No! Can I answer? No! But, from personal observation and experience, I can and do declare that "the steps of the righteous are ordered by the Lord"; that there is never a river he wades that God will permit to overflow him, never a desolation in which he will be left alone; never a tear shed that shall not by heavenly consolation be dried, never a grave he stands by unillumined by the glowing light and hope of resurrection. And I do here bear my testimony to the unfailing consolation of the promise that although we now see through

shadows darkly, we shall then see *"face to face."*

We have to wait but a little while. Mystifying as were the shadows which hung over the sepulchre and wrapped the garden in gloom, there is in them a remarkable feature. They were not cast by the failing light of the evening, but by the glimmering rays of a coming morning. They were not those black-cloaked couriers—the forerunners of the darkness and night; they were angels, robed in the first gray mists of dawn—heralds of the light and day. Mary had but to wait a little while and shimmering shafts of light would shoot over the eastern hills, bring a flush to the face of the sky, and reveal the form of One greater than Hyperion, the fabled incarnation of light and beauty.

Perhaps Mary told of it afterward, how the wet grass sparkled in it; how the verdure of the hedges brightened in it; how the branches of the hawthorn, the willow, and the sycamore trembled with the emotion of it; how the stream broke out into smiles and from its

crystal depths shot back gleams of light to the glowing sky; how even the gravestones and the vaults and the tombs were transfigured into monuments of the living; how the sunbeams struck out paths of deeper gold, making glistening highways leading straight to Heaven.

A friend of mine, who one Easter Sunday morn stood in the garden of the Gordon tomb, told me that was just how it was. And so I learn that we have only to wait a little while and the morning twilight will turn to radiant dawn. Then all that has been dark and mystifying and incomprehensible will be explained. In the glory of the Resurrection we shall find recompense for our sorrows, healing for our heart wounds, answer to all and every question. Like Mary, hearing the same voice that called her name call ours, we shall look up into the face of our risen Lord and cry "Rabboni!" "My Master!"

Mary had looked for Him in the sepulchre, but He was not there! He had freed Himself from the bondage of the tomb; angels had

rolled back the stone; He had escaped the damp, dark shadows of the sepulchre; shaking Himself from the shackles of all death, with the gates of earth's graves upon His shoulders, He came forth victoriously declaring—"I am he that liveth and was dead; and, behold, I am alive forevermore."

Someone not long since was saying to me that Christ did not rise. There have been others who have said He did not rise, but He *did* rise. If not, then how was it that sixty armed soldiers allowed His body to escape? Surely, surely, sixty living soldiers should have been able to keep one dead man! Blessed be God, He *did* rise! Mary of Magdala saw Him; the other women saw Him; Peter saw Him; the eleven disciples in the upper room saw Him; they in Galilee saw Him; the five hundred saw Him; Paul, as one born out of due time, saw Him. My unbelieving friend did *not* see Him; but he shall not rob me of the privilege of preferring the testimony of the five hundred and eighty-two who did see Him. While all nature, on every Spring morning—the beast

of every hoof, the bird of every wing, the fish of every scale, the verdure of every hill, the bud of every bush, the branch of every tree, the breath of earth and sky—arrays itself on my side of the argument, my friend will excuse me if I come out in strong language, with all the emphasis I can muster, and declare *He did rise!* So will our loved ones rise, rise from their cold graves of earth. They went down into the valley of death with so many ills, such physical weakness, such heart sufferings; but they shall rise in power, and in glory, and in honour and unto everlasting life!

What a flashing of rekindled eyesight! What quickening to immortal vitality, as, amid the rush of the rising wings of the redeemed, we greet Father and Mother and our darlings so long lost to our sight! The gladness of reunion that shall never more be severed; the gladness of praise that shall never more end; the gladness of anthems that shall never more cease; the gladness of that dear, bright land without a hearse, without a tear, without a shadow, without a death!

Jerusalem the golden!
  There all our birds that flew,
Our flowers half unfolden,
  Our pearls that turn to dew.
There all the glad life music
  We know no longer here,
Will come again to greet us,
  As we are drawing near.

As I write, I look away to a ladder of cloud set up against the sky, and I think how easy it would be for a spirit to climb it. The deep glow of the advancing sun has the semblance of a chariot of fire, drawn by horses of fire, and moving swiftly as though urged on by some mystic Phœbus or Apollo. A cloudlet floats thinly always like a wing of gold; higher and still higher it soars, and I say, my Lord and Saviour did rise. In the semblance of a cloud I see Him, even as Mary saw Him, her risen Lord, when she *supposed Him to be the gardener!*

AS A MOTHER

As one whom his mother comforteth.—Is. 66: 13.

WE HAVE thought of "Christ the Pilot," navigating our bark through a stormy voyage; for life is no calm lake, canopied with blue skies, but a dangerous sea, billowed up with trouble and o'erhung with storm-threatening clouds.

We have thought of "Christ the Shepherd," with weary, bleeding feet scaling highest steeps and penetrating deepest chasms, looking for the one lost lamb away from the ninety-nine that were safe in the fold.

We have thought of "Christ the Carpenter," living among us as one of life's humblest workmen, with understanding sympathy entering into closest bonds with all the toilers of the world.

We have thought of "Christ the Friend," standing close to our side, making joy the more joyous.

We have thought of "Christ the Consoler,"

making sorrow bearable and burdens easy; for into every heart from clouded skies "some rain must fall."

We have thought of "Christ the Light," rivalling all suns and paling all earthly brilliance, making plain the traveller's path, shedding a gleam into the mariner's midnight and throwing across the "valley of the shadow" a shaft of resurrection light.

We have thought of "Christ the Song"; "Christ the Everlasting"; "Christ the Wonderful"; "Christ the Father"; and now let us think upon

CHRIST AS A MOTHER.

All portrayals of Christ are wonderful; but, as we stand spellbound before a masterwork, so our very hearts are held in wonder as we look upon this representation which, in its intimate human revelation of matchless love, captivates and conquers us beyond and over all.

There are one or two characteristics of motherhood which, in all reverence, we may

venture to think were given perfect expression in the character of Christ.

A MOTHER'S PREFERENCE

In the happiest and most refined of families there are favourites. The fact may be concealed, never admitted, fought against; but no matter, there it is. There are those among the children—that boy, or that girl, to one or the other of which Father's and Mother's heart goes out with special affection. With Father it is generally for his son—usually the first-born. What high hopes are flung over that little head brimming full of mischief! Father says: "That's a fine, bright boy. He will take my place in the business one day. He will perpetuate my name. He shall not be handicapped by lack of education as I was. Never mind if I have to toil and sacrifice to send him to college—he's worth it. He is a great boy—that boy."

But how different with Mother. Her favourite is the delicate one. The one who can never bear what the others can, or do what

the others do; the one who has the awful setback of a crooked spine or blind eyes or a defective heart. That is the one for whom Mother makes her greatest sacrifices; that is the one for whom Mother stays home to make happy when the rest have gone to the party or the circus; that is the one for whom Mother puts aside the most dainty portion of the meal; it is the one of little, pale face that Mother kisses the oftenest; of little, frail form that she carries in her arms the most tenderly.

Yes, the little hunchback, or perhaps the little lad whose mind is defective or who will have to go all through life on crutches, is Mother's favourite.

So it is with our Lord and Saviour. Our natural weaknesses only draw out His great heart the more toward us. This must be the explanation of how exceptionally happy and joyous we so often find those who are sorely afflicted.

The sick room of dear Ensign May Rogers (although bedridden for eighteen years, and unable to move any part of her suffering body

for eleven years) had in it such a supernatural sunshine that as soon as I was in her presence I knew it to be the audience chamber of the King of kings.

Oh, take courage and comfort, you who feel yourselves so weak and wanting! Remember that not only is it written, "a bruised reed shall He not break," but that your very afflictions and frailties will the more endear you to His heart. Service rendered to Him, despite natural handicap, is of so much greater worth than service rendered with every natural advantage. If, in your voyage toward the blest shore, you are beset with human disadvantages or physical disadvantages or circumstantial disadvantages, remember that *as a mother* He careth for you the more.

A MOTHER'S UNDERSTANDING

With a mother the child's small grievances and distresses are large. The broken toy or the cut finger or the bumped head may not be much to Father. He is sorry to see the little one cry, but is so engaged with business matters

that he can't attach much importance to such infantile troubles. He says, "Oh, that's nothing; it will soon be better; run along!" But Mother gauges the significance of the grievance by the extent of the sorrow caused the child, and she seeks to repair the break, no matter what it may be, or bind up the wound, or try her best to make less the disappointment. Just as big as the trouble is to the little one or the young boy, her understanding sympathy makes it big to her.

And it is just this that makes us even now—long years after her sweet presence has passed beyond our reach—in our hearts tell her our troubles still; for she always understood what our troubles were to us, and although we are children of much older growth, we have never found anyone else who understands quite as she did. She would always bid us tell her all, saying, "No matter how great the mistake you have made, or how stupidly or wrongly you have acted, or how disastrous the position in which you find yourself, tell me how it all happened"; and we would know as we looked into

the anxious, tender eyes that we could depend upon the last drop of blood in the precious form to help us.

As a mother! Is this not what it means—"Come, let us reason together"? "Whatever the nature of your sins, tell Me about them, and though they be red like crimson they shall be as wool. Whatever the character of your sorrows, tell Me about them, and 'as one whom his mother comforteth so will I comfort you.'" Is this not what it means: He is "acquainted with grief"?—every grief—and that in His limitless knowledge and boundless kindness He persuades us to bring to Him and tell Him all: our sorrows, our mistakes, our sins; and He will listen, He will understand, He will forgive, He will cleanse, He will dry our tears, and with that kiss which rivals every embrace known to men and gods He will put the seal of His love upon us.

A MOTHER'S PATIENCE

Of all vocations motherhood brings the greatest strain upon human forbearance.

Mother's nerves may be taxed by scrubbing floors and mending clothes by day or by watching the sick infant by night; yet rarely does she give evidence that her endurance is breaking, rather throughout her great profession, with all its branches of tending and training, she shows that with trial her patience grows but stronger.

That is the reason there is no teacher like a mother. Life's earliest lessons require such exceptional patience. It takes a mother to teach the alphabet. Who without chiding or irritation would go over and over so many times the difference between M and N, and B and R?

Much has been written to extol and explain the wonders of Froebel and Montessori to the infant understanding, but how far short they fall of the ingenuity of Mother! Countless means and measures suggest themselves to her mind whereby the difficult becomes easy and the seemingly unexplainable comprehensible. Look, for instance, at the clever and often amusing inventions by which she aids the child to grasp the multiplication table—sometimes

by the use of apples, sometimes beads, sometimes bricks, inventions and plans which she only could devise.

Looking back to my own childhood I seem to see my mother as if it were but yesterday, with her loving, gentle face, her soft, wondrous eyes, leaning over me at the piano. So simple and so plain she made those first sheets of music, with all the printed notes looking like a lot of fork prongs engaged in pugilistic combat. I see now the delicate hand upon the keyboard, showing me over and over the same exercise, note by note, without one impatient utterance or one word as to my being slow or stupid, which would have so disheartened me.

Ah! mothers are wonderful! and in nothing more wonderful than in their patience.

AS A MOTHER

So it is with Christ. Our stupidity and slowness cannot tire Him. He never expects from us clearer vision or quicker understanding or more efficient service than is ours to give. He leads us, step by step, note by note, letter by

letter. He does not crowd all our lessons upon us at once; does not ask all our sacrifices the same day. He measures out the exact weight of the burden for His children, and then gives strength accordingly. He is willing to wait for our souls to "grow in grace." I believe this is the chief reason why His abundant mercy has veiled from our eyes the future; for what could more greatly intensify the acuteness of to-day's sorrows than a knowledge of to-morrow's?

Oh, the ineffable wisdom and incomparable tenderness of Christ's school! He stoops down to our infantile minds and teaches us "line upon line, precept upon precept"; one day this, another day that. He has been teaching some of us thirty, and some of us fifty, years the same lesson, from the same book, and we do not properly know it yet; and yet it is all so simple. Thousands of times He has explained it to us in different ways—that one little word of five letters—T-R-U-S-T. We still stumble over it, yet the patience of Jesus is not exhausted. If He had been as a schoolmaster He would have punished us; if as a

father He would have been angry with us; but He is *as a mother,* and so He bears with us and leads us on, little by little, into a perfect knowledge of a perfect trust in Him, which makes life and death an unbroken morning.

A MOTHER'S FORGIVENESS

In this the heart of the mother enthrones all else; for in her boundless capacity to forgive she outstrips everything that is human and comes nearest to the Divine.

See her pardoning love following that wayward boy! With his broken promises piled like burned-out cinders in her heart; with her repeated expectations, raised by his resolutions, earthquaked into heaps of ruin; with all the flowering of his promising manhood blighted ere it bloomed before her hopeful gaze; with all the ruins of his early wreck staring her in the face, yet that undying, tenacious, immortal something, which alone finds life in the breast of mothers, rises up and refuses to abandon him, to let him go, to declare him hopeless; but again and again, and for the seventy times

seventh time *will* hope, *will* forgive, *will* trust, *will* have brighter visions, *will* pray, *will* believe, *will* expect, although probabilities declare to her that she is only lengthening out the long-suffering path for her poor feet to tread.

When does a mother give a boy up? Where is the milestone that marks the end of the travel of a mother's heart? Never! Away on highest hill, down in deepest sea, across widest range she follows him.

I see that poor, wandering son crossing the seas and putting half the world between him and the one who gave him birth, but he cannot get away from his mother's heart.

I see him flinging the last remnants of respectability behind him in a deeper plunge into infamy and crime, but his mother's heart goes down with him into the darkness.

I see his waywardness turning from his every other well-wisher, every other helper, every other friend, but his mother's heart is closer yet; and, no matter how branded and sin-stained he comes back to her, he will find

her waiting with wounded breast ready for him to lean his poor bruised head upon, and her arms outstretched to gather him into love and pardon.

As a mother! Jesus is slow to give a man up. He gives the wanderer chance after chance to prove His promise to pardon and to save.

Walk through the dismal corridors of our penal institutions, look into the faces of those who haunt the underworld, and tell me if anything else but Divine love can account for the very existence of these forlorn hopes. They have been given up by society, given up by their friends, given up by their families, given up by their own despairing souls; but all their wickedness and abominations have not carried them out of the reach of Christ's pardoning forgiveness. He has not given them up. He still puts opportunities in their way. He still makes mercy's call ring in their ears. He still sends rays of light to illumine their souls' midnight. A human saviour said to me, "That man is irreclaimable; words are wasted on him; effort thrown away." "Well," I replied,

"Christ has not given him up; He still sees something in him to pity, something deep under all the chaos to which to appeal; something—oh, miracle of compassion—something He died to redeem!"

Who can measure the range of such pardon? Who can sound the depths of such mercy? Have you that read this forgotten it? Do you say, "I have sinned away my day of grace; I have lost all claim upon the One who died for me"? Do you say, "I am lost"? No, not lost, not beyond help! You will be if you go on; yes, by the unalterable and inexorable laws of judgment, you will be lost if you go on, but not lost yet, for God has not given you up. His nail-pierced hands are outflung to meet you, and His hand is *as a mother's* hand. What it touches it heals. It is not a sheriff's hand, this hand which would take hold of you. Not a hard hand, a cold hand, an enemy's hand. It is a gentle hand, a soft hand, a sympathetic hand—even *as a mother's.*

As a mother Christ will put His children to sleep. When the party is over, and the games

are done, and the guests are all gone, it is no easy task to get the little one to sleep, and as soon as nurse or aunty or the big sister ceases to pat the back or takes her foot from the rocker, the large eyes open, and the work must be done all over again. Even Father is of no use here, but Mother gathers up the little thing and, sitting in the rocking-chair, swings back and forth, and there is an opiate in the arms that circle the little body, a sedative in the soothing breast upon which the head is laid, a lullaby as of distant bells in the voice which softly sings, and before the old clock calls out another half hour flown the child is asleep.

As a mother, Jesus will put His children to sleep.

We need not fear that dread hour. He will gather us, *as a mother* gathers her child, in His arms everlasting, and upon His breast will hush our weariness into rest perpetual.

As I write I think upon the day my mother died. She passed away in a little cottage by the sea. It was stormy, and the waves, which leaped high against the rugged rocks, were so like the

sorrow which struck our breaking hearts. We were called to her bedside, and although for two long years we had expected it, it seemed incredible to have to associate death with her. She had been so vital to us, such a forerunner, so triumphant in her individual warfare, so glorious in her self-forgetting service for others. How could we reconcile her splendid powers with the terror of dissolution? But death was there. We could see its gray shadow falling upon the precious face. The terrible suffering which had racked her was suddenly assuaged, she was restful—quiet. She was beyond all speech. Her eyes, shining with the brilliancy of stars to the last, passed from one child to another and then became fixed upon my father's face—that face which had been the one face of all the world to her. It seemed that she had an understanding with my father that if speech left her before death came, and if she realized that Christ was with her in the valley, she would wave her handkerchief to let her husband and her children know that all was well with her at the last. Rallying her remain-

ing strength she raised it up—up—up, once, twice, thrice. Only an instant it remained uplifted; then the worn, tired arm sank, but still the hand was raised, and when that could no longer uphold, her thin forefinger moved back and forth, back and forth, then fell, the eyes closed, and she was asleep. But we received the message; we knew that she had found in the valley the One for whom she had looked, and that upon His breast He had given "His beloved sleep."

For all time that precious finger of my dying mother, covered with the little white handkerchief signalling the triumph of grace in death, will mean more to my soul's faith than all the theological books and scientific arguments history has ever known.

AS A MOTHER!

THE NAME SUPERNAL

Thou shalt call his name Jesus.—Matthew 1 : 21.

HIS name, Jesus, or Joshua—"Jehovah the Saviour"—is declared to be no mere name, or indicative of some abstract truth, or of some principle to be developed in relation to His history. Nay, Jehovah's people are His people, and He therefore is Jehovah the Saviour, He is the full reality of His name:

HE SHALL SAVE HIS PEOPLE FROM THEIR SINS.

His name is incomparable. God, the Creator, has named Him; has given Him a name "above every name"; and at that name "every knee shall bow, and every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father."

THOU SHALT CALL HIS NAME JESUS

Care must be exercised in the interpretation of Shakespeare's immortal question, "What's

in a name?" if the answer is to be given with any semblance of discrimination or judgment. A mere negation is certainly not sufficient, for sometimes the whole story is in a name. A man's name becomes so inseparably identified with his life and character that it may be regarded as a sort of miniature biography, with the high spots for good or evil starred in the preface. Or it may be likened to a face by which he is unmistakably and universally recognized.

There are names we cannot hear without a shudder, and there are names whose beloved cadences fall on our ears like divinely sacred music, and are an inspiration to all men. Among these latter may be mentioned "mother"—the sum of all life's blessings; "friend"—sweetest flower of altruism; "the baby"—which vibrates perhaps the finest and most sensitive chords of the human heart.

Then there are the great names that stand out like mountain peaks in the long history of man.

Moses, for all time, illustrative of exalted

personal integrity, of constructive statesmanship, of legislation founded on the principles of eternity and sublime faith in God.

David, the sweet singer of Israel, invariably recalls God's declaration of a man "after His own heart."

Paul, to whom was revealed the secret of secrets, the omnipotence of Divine love, himself the symbol of Divine revelation.

Alexander the Great, with all his glory, suggests the pitiable limitations of human ambition.

Nero, "one compound of mud and blood"—as his people called him—a synonym for bestial brutality.

When we hear such names as Savonarola, Wycliff, Huss, Luther, Knox, Calvin, and Bunyan, we behold again the undimmed torches of truth with which they defied the darkness of superstition, overcame false doctrine, heresy, and schism, and blazed a trail throughout the ages for the progress of the Christian faith.

At the name of Washington our pulses leap with enthusiastic patriotism, and before our mental vision there rises the noble form of that "statesman, soldier, patriot, sage, reviser of creeds, teacher of truth and justice, achiever and preserver of liberty; the first of men, founder and saviour of his country, father of his people, solitary and unapproachable in his grandeur."

The name of Abraham Lincoln will ever stand for the two greatest forces of national life—liberty and union.

Such a name as Frances Willard compels us to bow in reverence and admiration for the intellectual breadth and spiritual powers of her sex, and in the realization of her message her memory will ever be enshrined in the hearts and homes of America.

Who can hear the name of William Booth, Founder of the Salvation Army, and in the name not read the man, the life, the service to the world, of the "Apostle to the Poor"?

But there is one Name transcendently unique in the wealth of its suggestion and meaning.

A Name presaged before birth and heralded above all others; a Name that made Heaven and earth to stand in inexpressible and mysterious wonderment, while angelic choirs proclaimed its natal morn. A Name that flashed in the meteor that swung over Bethlehem hills and led the Magi of the East to cross the desert trails that they might behold the One of whom it spoke. A Name that pierced the hard nature of Herod and convulsed his mind with fear. A Name despised by the Pharisaical magnates of Jerusalem, but crowned by the lowly fishermen of Galilee as the Promised of the Lord Most High.

This Name has lifted a flaming torch wherever it has travelled, and has illumined the bitter darkness of heathendom with the light of revelation. It has abolished the inhuman practices of heathen worship. It has broken the cords that bound the girl-widow to the funeral pyre. It has delivered little children from yawning-mouthed crocodiles. It has penetrated the black pall of superstition and swept

the midnight sky of heathendom with a blaze which all the powers of sin and Hell can never extinguish.

And by what reasons have such signs followed the progress of this Name in its starlike course through the ages? The answer is writ in the language of Heaven, in the fulfilment of prophecy. It is the Name of the Only Begotten of the Father, the supreme expression of the Divine will for man's everlasting destiny—in all ages, for all colours and all creeds. And just as the rays of the sun come millions of miles in night-dispelling energy till not a vestige of darkness is left to mar the splendour of its meridian glory, so this Name of Jesus will dispel all darkness from the souls and lives of men.

"THOU SHALT CALL HIS NAME JESUS, FOR HE SHALL SAVE HIS PEOPLE FROM THEIR SINS."

THOU

addressed to Joseph: thus the Divine purpose imposes individual obligation. This is God's way, God's law, from the beginning.

How that "thou" reverberates from Genesis to Revelation! "Of every tree of the garden *thou* mayest freely eat." Adam, "Where art *thou?"* Cain, "What hast *thou* done?" And so page after page the direct, personal address. How solemn this application to us all!

SHALT

This *shalt* is an imperative command of Jehovah; it is serious to contradict or disobey. There was no alternative, no need for family discussion, no other name preceding and no other name following. Through all the realms of Glory, through all the caverns of the lost, through the length and breadth of earth, His Name forevermore is *Jesus!* That *shalt* of Almighty God remains for all time.

CALL

Tell it out, proclaim it from Zion's hill, in the valley of Jehoshaphat, on the Mount called Olivet, in the Temple of Diana, in the slave marts of Europe, in the black holes of heathendom, in the royal corridors of kings and

emperors, in the lowest regions of the wretched; wherever men huddle together in misery and sin—tell it out!

Such is the exact meaning of the word "call" where, in Genesis 13:4, it is said that "Abram called on the name of the Lord," literally "made that name the means and medium of a *divine proclamation.*"

HIS NAME

It is His own Name; it defines His personality; it proclaims His infinity; it declares His deity. It is the Name by which we shall ever honour His birth, life, death, resurrection, and mediatorial place at the Throne of the Father in the skies—

JESUS!

There is a miraculous, dawn-breaking, sin-pardoning, and wound-healing meaning in that name.

The whole world stood still, the angels flung down light over the midnight hills, while heavenly choirs announced it; it was in the

"Glory to God"; in the "peace on earth"; in the "good will to men."

"THOU SHALT CALL HIS NAME JESUS, FOR HE SHALL SAVE HIS PEOPLE FROM THEIR SINS."

I like the personal possessive in this expression—His people. There is the ring of patriotism in it. There is the admission of the greatest sorrow that ever shadowed the face of Him that sitteth on the Throne in it. God wanted a people for His own, His very own, when the world was still in its cradle. He gave lands and herds and silver and gold and cities and palaces and princes and rulers to the people He had chosen; but, with deepest pathos, it is recorded—

"HE CAME UNTO HIS OWN, AND HIS OWN RECEIVED HIM NOT!"

We know how they despised His marvellous gifts, how they forsook the unseen for the seen, how they treated His prophets with disdain, how they journeyed to the groves of Baal and Ashtaroth, how they substituted an earthly

throne for the glory of the Shekinah, and finally how, having lapsed into polytheism if not paganism, they were destroyed by their enemies, shattered and scattered throughout the world.

Mother, Father, can you imagine what would be your feelings if not one, but all of your children grew up to curse you, forsook the paths of their childhood, and "turned every one to their own way"? And if you saw the whole world in similar rebellion, would you not first, out of them all, if it were possible, select your own for succour and salvation?

With what infinitely more love and compassion God looked upon the backsliding of Israel! Consequently the very first note of deliverance, echoing and reëchoing through the galleries of Heaven and vibrating through every corridor of earth, offered salvation to *His people.* I am one of those who believe that the time will come when our Saviour "shall see of the travail of His soul and be satisfied."

His coming was universal and all-comprehensive, for

"GOD SO LOVED THE WORLD THAT HE GAVE HIS ONLY BEGOTTEN SON, THAT WHOSOEVER BELIEVETH IN HIM SHOULD NOT PERISH, BUT HAVE EVERLASTING LIFE."

He came to bring salvation to all peoples.

What is wrong with the world? It is not the lack of bread. It is not the wrath of man against man, nation against nation. There is a sense in which that evil cures itself. As time goes on, the gaps in national and international strife become wider and wider. War is spasmodic. Men cannot always be fighting.

What is wrong with the world is not through lack of law and order. Regrettable as disorder is, it is not so rampant to-day as it has been in the history of peoples centuries gone by. One of the wonders of our time is the peaceable and orderly life of the millions of people in our great cities. No, run up the gamut of our civilization's activities and you cannot ascribe the cause of the world's unrest to any specific ill—economic, social, or commercial. The world's chief need is still to be found in the human heart.

The densely materialized brains of Judea would have hailed even the Nazarene had He proclaimed the overthrow of the Romans and the restoration of the Kingdom of Israel. But what permanent good would a material kingdom have been even in the overthrow of Cæsar? The throne of the empire to be overthrown was in the human will. Hence the Lord's cry—"Thy Kingdom come!" Unseen, but almighty; set up, not in wealth or material power, but love-enthroned, a kingdom from everlasting to everlasting, with Jesus Christ as King.

Jesus is the Name above all others, because He saves from sin. He goes to the root of all evil, all tyranny, all disorder—sin. He has conquered this imperious monster that wrecks humanity; He ever lives to realize in every surrendered life the glory of His triumph. The venom of the sting He extracts, the leprous disease He cures. The Saviourhood of Jesus is sufficient.

Jesus is the Name above all others because

He made Himself partner with us in our sufferings—

"HE TASTED DEATH FOR EVERY MAN."

Few kings know their kingdom; fewer still their subjects. But Jesus knows us all. He knows us not only as a people, a nation, a church, a society; He knows us individually. He knows our weaknesses, our temptations, our trials, our fears, our failures, our physical ailments, our mental doubts, our shipwrecked hopes. "Even the very hairs of our head are all numbered." This we have upon His own word, and Paul also affirms that He is "not one who cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin."

JESUS IS THE NAME

above all others, because it promises most for the world. He is the coequal of God in Heaven and the Executor over all on earth. He is the dispenser of the gifts and graces of the Com-

forter; He bestows the Holy Spirit. His promises anticipate every need. If a deliverer arose in London to-morrow, promising work for England's unemployed, he would be proclaimed greater than all the monarchs that have been crowned in Westminster Abbey. But here is Jesus, King of kings and Lord of lords, whose power enables us to overcome all evil. In His hands we become the subjects of a science that turns the bitter into sweet, the evil into good, and death into the elixir of life.

JESUS IS OUR MEDIATOR

The short span of His life on earth, from the manger to the Cross, has forged an inseverable link between man and God. With one hand He takes hold of Omnipotence; with the other He lifts up frail and broken humanity. In His divinity He is God's Son; in His humanity He is our Elder Brother. He will safeguard all the claims of God, for He is in filial relationship to Him; He will have understanding sympathy with us, for He "is acquainted with our griefs."

Heaven charged Him with its momentous, unparalleled mission, but He never lost sight of our interests, and to save our souls from death He flung His broken body across the yawning gap of our destruction. Through Him we know the Divine mind and understand the glory of our destiny. Why then should I hesitate to lay all life's cares and mistakes and sins and troubles at His feet?

Jesus is the Name above all others because

HE SAVES FROM SIN.

The Magdalen fell at His feet in humble contrition and love. The woman of Samaria ran all excited to the men of the city, saying: "Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did; is not this the Christ?" He is the sinner's Saviour. He has the knowledge, the power, and the passion of a Saviour. He understands sin, its awfulness, its peril, and its pain. Men catalogue and condemn the enormity of the *act;* Jesus takes into account the strength of the tempter, and comes with

power to save the soul which, left to itself, is inevitably lost.

I call upon all the saints on earth, and upon all the redeemed in Heaven to lift with me hallelujahs! Ten thousand hallelujahs!

The Bible records that an angel one day measured Heaven. I can see that rod jewelled in the sun that never grows old. All along the golden highways he measured, all along the sea of glass, all along the walls of jasper—from portal to portal—hundreds of miles around, as the Bible estimates.

Although the account be figurative, what a wonderful home it is that Jesus is preparing for us! And it is a better Heaven now than when John wrote of it. A multitude of the redeemed have passed in since then. My mother is there. My father is there. Your loved ones are there. But, best of all, Jesus is there! We shall sit down by the waters of the river of life, o'erhung by the tree bearing the twelve manner of fruits, the leaves of which are for the healing of the nations. We shall want for nothing all through eternity. No suffering will draw the features,

no discord will jar the ear, no fears will grip the heart, no tears will blind the eyes—all by reason of the glorious truth

JESUS WILL BE THERE!

Always there. Eternal Summer—eternal joy—eternal love.

Jesus is the Name above all others because it is the stupendous, incontrovertible, heaven-superlative fact of the universe.

We migrate to-day from the shores of the Stars and Stripes, and following the star set in the Heaven of His will, we find again the Babe in the Manger. Blessed, holy Babe! We kneel by the crude grass basket that lies in the feeding bin, and behold in the brow of Mary's Child the glory of our King: no! sweeter far, we read the Promise of God—the Bread of Heaven—Jesus our Saviour, our Pardon-bringer, our Redeemer and Friend! We return to this land of liberty, this glorious diamond of jewelled States, and look upon the mangers where lie the poor and the outcast, the sick and the suffering. We kneel by their cots, and upon their fore-

heads we trace the reflection of Bethlehem's glory—

JESUS, THE WORLD'S REDEEMER!

This is the work of the Salvation Army in the United States of America. It was for this high office I was commissioned—"The Commander"—the title by which I am known as the leader of our organized forces; but at this kindly season—I write at Christmastide—which brings human affection to its highest tide, my heart abounds with good will and the spirit of oneness with all men. Let me not then, upon this day, when all minds are upon Bethlehem's Manger, be thought of as *The Commander,* but as one equal with my people in the divine bonds of loving fellowship and service made possible by the newborn King. If God so loved us, let us so love one another.

THE ULTIMATE SOVEREIGNTY

Thine is the kingdom.—Matthew 6: 13.

How stupendous the claim! In all the history of the world no potentate has been able to establish his title to a dominion so vast. From time immemorial conquerors have dreamed of it, but only to awaken to the consciousness of its unreality. Province has been added to province, kingdom to kingdom, nation to nation, until an empire has been built up overtowering the world. But the cumbrous structure has been shattered into its component parts which, either perishing in their unequal struggle or entering into more harmonious alliance, have been reconstructed into other empires, only to rise and fall and recombine with an inflexible regularity.

No nation has yet exhibited qualities that have commanded the affection and confidence of peoples beyond its borders or given promise

of making the dream a reality. Neither in the old world nor in the new is there indication of a people emerging, a system of philosophy enduring, or a government in process of constitution that is likely to unite the divergent and contrary natures of men and justify an attempt at world-wide conquest. In the claim of every human aspirant for such dominion there is something inherently defective. Forgotten as God appears to be in this world, in Him alone inheres the right to command universal service, love, and loyalty.

God alone has the indisputable right. He alone possesses the attributes and perfections, the moral and spiritual, as well as physical power, that constitute Him the ruler whose Government would provide for the needs of all peoples and insure the well-being of the entire world, for "Thine is the Kingdom!"

THE WORLD BELONGS TO GOD BY THE INALIENABLE RIGHT OF CREATION

"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth."

By the word of His power He evoked from chaos the form and order of creation. He marshalled the stars into their unvarying courses. He determined the drift of the wind. He tipped the seas from the hollow of His hand. He made the sun to shine, the rain to fall, the mountains to lift their snow-crowned peaks; and, by His nurturing care, brought forth from void and gloom a garden of loveliness fit for angels' feet to tread and for Himself to occupy.

"He made the earth by His power, He hath established the world by His wisdom, and hath stretched out the heavens by His discretion. When He uttereth His voice, there is a multitude of waters in the heavens, and He causeth the vapours to ascend from the ends of the earth; He maketh lightnings with rain, and bringeth forth the wind out of His treasures."

THINE IS THE KINGDOM!

The Hebrew poets sang not only of the glories of the earth, the hidden treasures of

the deep, the abundant yielding of hills and plains; but they acknowledged His ownership of their personal possessions, saying, "The cattle on a thousand hills are Thine." Not until we grasp this fact, and let it determine and regulate all our plans and calculations, can we realize our right relationship to the world. Our world is God's from the moment we ascribe with all our hearts its ownership to Him. From that moment we become stewards, not lords, of our possessions; servants, not masters; members of one family of which the Lord of Hosts is the Head.

THE WORLD BELONGS TO GOD BECAUSE OF THE SUSTENANCE HE GIVES TO ITS INHABITANTS

The bread we break, the cup of water we put to our lips, the garments that protect us from the cold, the light that marks the traveller's path, the knowledge that meets our intellectual requirements, and the ten thousand earthly joys that minister to the felicity of the human family are constant declarations of the

unceasing provision of the great Creator for the sons and daughters of His universe. Surely through gratitude alone we should do everything in our power to win back to God the love and loyalty of a world that takes its daily bread from His hands, making the recognition of our own entire dependence upon Him one of the first duties of our lives. Our gifts, our talents, our influence, as well as our material possessions, should all belong to God.

THE WORLD BELONGS TO GOD; FOR IN HIM ALONE ARE RESOURCES FOR ITS RESTORATION

Apart from Him, there is no remedy for its sin, no healing for its sorrow, no resurrection for its grave. Rich as this world is in natural opulence, brilliant though it be in its course amid planetary spheres, enticing and captivating as are its countless interests, there is nevertheless at its heart a canker humanly incurable in its nature and bitter in its power. It thwarts man's best intentions; it reduces to ashes his most glowing hopes. There is no strength or

beauty of mental, physical, or spiritual forces that the guilt and power of sin will not utterly spoil.

Through the forbearance of God, Satan has been permitted to defile what God pronounced good, but God is the only Destroyer of the dark and deadly power of sin, the only Conqueror of this arch-foe of the human race. To Him let the whole world turn!

"Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever; a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom."

THE WORLD BELONGS TO GOD, BECAUSE FOR IT HE GAVE HIS SON TO DIE

The birth of Christ was local, but it was because "God so loved the world" that He came to it at all. The angelic choir that sang out over the hills of Bethlehem was local, but the theme of its song was for all men:

"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."

The miracles of Christ were local, but He said to His disciples—"Greater works than

these shall ye do"—and bade them go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature. The agony in the Garden, the mocking of the Judgment Hall, the uplifted tree on Calvary, were local; but the outstretched arms of that passion and death encircled all nations, all peoples, and by that sacrifice was the whole earth redeemed.

"Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world!"

THINE IS THE KINGDOM!

Peter may have thought that salvation was for Jews only, but when the light in full-orbed splendour burst upon him, he cried:

"Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons; but in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him.

Salvation for every nation is the unchanging purpose, the supreme object of the Salvation Army. This is the doctrine proclaimed, this is the Gospel announced, this is the programme set forth in our motto:

THE WORLD FOR GOD BY BLOOD AND FIRE

The marvellous results achieved by our efforts cannot be enumerated. The history of our organization, if not a continuance, is as thrilling as the Acts of the Apostles; the rapidity of its growth is unequalled in the annals of Christendom. Faith in the purpose of God to assert and assume Lordship over the world He created has carried our flag into seventy different countries and colonies. The Salvation Army, bearing the Cross of Jesus, has marched through the jungles of India, over the veldts of Africa, down into the mines of Australia, among the aboriginal villages of New Zealand, before the cowboys of western America, up the steeps of the Rockies, and where the fishing smacks hug the storm-lashed shores of Newfoundland.

Into the desolate hovel of the drunkard, into the sordid dens of vice and crime, into the vile haunts of midnight horror, into the soundless abyss of want and woe, into the dreary cell of the convict, our Soldiers of the Cross and the

Flag have carried the tidings of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

We preach a world-Redeemer, a world-Saviour, a world-Comforter. In the proclamation of our Gospel there is no geographical boundary, no circumscriptive creed, no recognition of race or colour. God for the world, and the whole world for God!

THINE IS THE KINGDOM!

Can we not as a Christian people get a wider vision, more all-embracing hearts? Should we not on all days, and especially on days of holiest memory, muster our most generous resources and show forth in deeds our good will to men? Does not every association of Yuletide appeal to all that is best in us to remember our neighbour? Are not such days the sweetest, the dearest, the most sacred we could select on which to reconsecrate our lives to the Bethlehem Christ, to think more for others, and do more for others, that the whole world may be better because we are in it?

I write in a small log cabin hidden by the woods, upon the shores of one of our loveliest lakes, where for the past few weeks I have been seeking to recover my health.

It is evening. Across the lake the mountains lift their shadow-draped shoulders into the blue mists of the serenest of skies. In my ears is the laughing of advancing waters as wavelet chases wavelet through the nooks and over the moss-covered boulders of the rocky shore. From their leafy galleries night birds carol their evening anthem, while the soft note of a distant whippoorwill pledges his promise of a fair to-morrow.

But away from all this blessed quietude, beyond the lake and the mountains, I see the great fields of church activities stretching from sea to sea of this unequalled country, and behold consecrated people of all ranks, toiling for the good of men; in the slum, in the prison, in the orphanage, in the hospital, in the hall, in the street, in the office, in the police court; by the side of the dying, with the hungry, nursing the children, encouraging the hopeless,

defending the weak: in all these things seeking to serve the world's Redeemer and bless mankind.

Yes, I see that more must be done. Yes, much more. More must be done individually. I must do more and you must do more. We must persuade others to do more. Lands yet unevangelized must have the Gospel. The distant isles of the sea must be Christianized. Greater must be our activities, wider-pushed must be our principles, multiplied must be our plans, stronger—much stronger—must be our faith. We want more sacrifice, more zeal, more consecrated men and women, that the coming year may be crowned with a record in harmony with the purposes of God and opportunities unsurpassed in the history of religion.

On a quiet night you can hear the notes of the bugle-call for two or three miles, but the Gospel trumpet is so far-reaching that it is not only heard from heaven to earth, but it is to echo through all nations. Men who have lost all physical hearing have thrilled at the first note of it; men buried half a lifetime in crime

have quickened into life at the sound of it. It is the power of God unto salvation. Despite the clattering hoofs of a cavalry troop Saul heard it and reined in his charger on the road to Damascus.

In the customhouse, amid the shuffle and the high voices of disputing merchants, Matthew answered its clarion call.

At its summons dynasties crumble, thrones tumble, nations leap from barbarism to civilization—a world is redeemed—for, "Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever."

THINE IS THE KINGDOM!

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